

[VIDEO] How do masks protect us from Coronavirus?

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Introduction

In South Africa it is an offence to be in a public space without wearing a mask.

But do you know WHY you have to wear one?

Let's look at the science.

Body

Think of your breath as a launch pad for rocket ships.

Through speaking, sneezing, coughing and breathing we launch thousands of tiny rockets into the air around us.

The rockets — or particles — fly out at high speeds.

Just take a look at this guy's sneeze in slow-motion.

The big rockets are called **respiratory droplets**. They lose momentum and crash to the ground near you.

The small rockets are called **aerosols**.

They're like the small part of a rocket ship that breaks off in space.

Aerosols hang in the air.

They can do so from a couple of minutes to hours.

It all depends on how ventilated a room is.

When aerosols fall down, they land on surfaces like door handles, chairs or even your face.

All sorts of things live in these little ships - even SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

When we ingested these particles through our mouths and noses - COVID spreads.

Masks lower the number of particles we are exposed to. They also reduce the number of virus carrying rockets which sick people can launch into the air we all breathe.

“So why not just wear masks only around sick people?”...

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The amount of virus in a person's body is usually highest right before they show symptoms.

But some people show no symptoms at all!

This makes it difficult to figure out who has been infected and who hasn't.

So it makes sense to assume that we're all potential carriers of SARS-CoV-2.

Conclusion

Some virus particles will eventually get through masks.

But they will make sure that you breathe in fewer virus particles.

And this is exactly what we need them to do because we know you're less likely to develop severe COVID when you ingest fewer viral particles.

Millions of people around the world are getting vaccinated against COVID.

But face coverings will be a part of our lives for the foreseeable future.

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