Chisago County
Health and Human Services
Public Health Division

Why is there Resistance to Wearing a Mask?
MEDIA ADVISORY

The debate about mask effectiveness still plays out today in the US, with some claiming masks are not effective. This is in stark contrast to other countries where populations have generally been compliant in wearing face coverings. One reason for the confusion of the effectiveness of face masks was, initially, that masks needed to be prioritized for medical workers. Another reason was our unfamiliarity with the virus itself. Now, overtime, learning that the coronavirus travels through droplets, like a sneeze in close quarters, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that everyone wear a mask or cloth face covering in public areas where social distancing is difficult to maintain.

With more than 100,000 people who have died from COVID-19, the US has the highest death toll of any country in the world. Although, some people rebel against the idea of wearing a face covering because they don't like being told what to do, wearing a mask is a violation of individual freedom, and so not wearing a mask becomes a symbol of individualism. We also know from psychology that role models are very powerful influences on individual behavior, and some of Americans top role models are reluctant to wearing a mask.

The idea of wearing a mask needs to be destigmatized. If everybody is wearing face masks that would mean infected and asymptomatic people are wearing masks. That could help to reduce the amount of virus which gets into the environment and potentially causes infections. While face masks might bring a little discomfort, and make it harder to spot the facial expressions of those we are talking to, those things are a small price to pay for keeping the people around us safe and well.

For the latest information about COVID-19 in Chisago County, visit @ChisagoCountyPublicHealth on Facebook or the Chisago County COVID-19 Information Page.