



**The Y in Central Maryland. For a better us.**

## **Frequently Asked Questions for Mask Requirements, Effective 11/18/20**

### **Why is the Y going beyond the minimum restrictions required by the state?**

Sunday, November 15th marked the 12th straight day coronavirus case numbers in Maryland increased by at least 1,000 new cases. This is very troubling, and so we are taking a more restrictive approach to do our part to keep our Ys open and accessible while protecting the community's health.

The Y is thoroughly committed to community well-being. We have worked diligently throughout the pandemic to provide a safe environment that supports the health of our members and associates. We believe that these enhanced requirements are the responsible and common sense thing to do right now.

We realize that this may be an inconvenience for some members, but we need your partnership to support our community at this critical time. We will continue to monitor health metrics and recommendations from the CDC and local health officials and will modify our approach as circumstances allow. Like you, we look forward to getting back to normal as soon as possible!

### **What types of face coverings are acceptable?**

Acceptable face coverings include masks, scarves, bandanas, and gaiters that fully cover the nose and mouth and fit snugly against the sides of your face without gaps. We do not allow masks with exhalation valves or vents.

Currently, the CDC does not recommend the use of face shields alone as adequate for protection, though evaluation is ongoing. As such, we do not allow face shields to substitute for other face coverings.

Also, please remember that social distancing practices still need to stay in place even while wearing face coverings.

### **What about children?**

We are following the CDC which recommends that children ages 2 and older should wear masks indoors.

## **How can I make exercise in a mask more comfortable?**

Masks made of cloth or a moisture-wicking material like polyester typically work best. A number of companies have developed masks with materials and design that makes exercise more comfortable.

Paper masks should be avoided since they can break down when they become wet from sweat. Depending on the length of your workout, you may want to consider carrying a spare to replace a damp mask.

Some people find that using a plastic/silicone inner bracket or cage can make it more comfortable to exercise in a mask, though it's important that you are still able to maintain the fit of the mask without creating gaps.

We recommend that you consider modifying the intensity of your workout if you are not used to exercising with a mask. As you gain experience and comfort, you can gradually increase the intensity over time. You should stop and take a break if you experience any of the following: dizziness, drowsiness, fatigue, headache, muscular weakness, shortness of breath, or overall feeling of discomfort.

## **Are there any areas of the Y where a mask is not required?**

Masks are not required in the pool, though we require that you wear your mask on the pool deck until you enter the pool, and upon exiting. You may also remove your mask to shower on the pool deck or in the locker room, but otherwise you must wear it in the locker room.

Masks may be temporarily lowered or raised to hydrate.

For outdoor activities such as outdoor group exercise, masks are not required as long as adequate social distancing is possible.

## **What else are you doing to keep the Y safe?**

We are providing enhanced thorough and frequent cleaning of our facilities, both during the day and overnight. This includes the use of microbial sprayers which are also used by airlines and hospitals to get at hard to reach crevices to assure extra disinfection. We ask for your help by using the disinfectant wipes located throughout our Ys before and after you use equipment.

In addition, we have moved or placed equipment out of service in order to maintain adequate social distancing. We have installed plexiglass barriers in areas where equipment is facing each other. Capacities have been limited in group exercise classes to increase spacing between participants.

We also continue to do symptom and temperature checks for associates and members at our entrances. We'll continue to follow the advice of the CDC and local health officials to incorporate additional measures as needed.

**What if I am unable or unwilling to exercise with a mask?**

We have several options available to you that do not require use of masks. You may consider participating in our outdoor activities, swimming, or taking group exercise classes in the pool. We have also made online group exercise options available at the following link: <https://ymaryland.org/covid19/exercise>

**Thank you!**