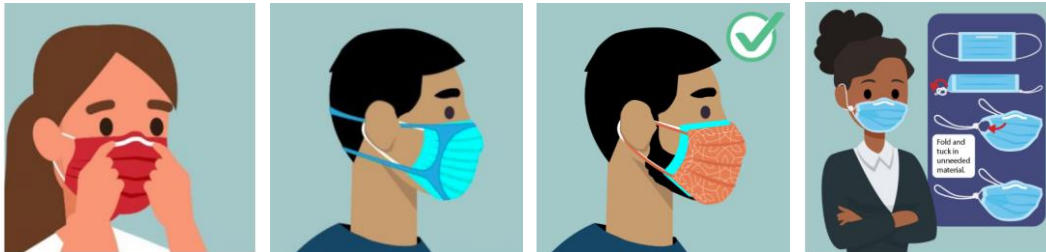


## Improving the Effectiveness of Your Mask

If using a surgical mask, there are 2 key things to keep in mind:

### 1. **Improve the fit of your mask**

- Choose a mask that fully covers your nose and mouth
- The mask should fit snugly and should not be gaping anywhere
- Some ways to help with this include:
  - Choose a mask with a nose wire to help prevent air leakage – bend the nose wire over your nose to conform to your face
  - Get a mask fitter or brace – these can be used over top of medical or cloth masks and help reduce air leakage
  - Wear one disposable mask underneath a cloth mask that has multiple layers of fabric. The second mask should push the edges of the inner mask snugly against the face
  - Knotting and Tucking – knot the ear loops of the mask where they join the edge of the mask, then fold and tuck the unneeded material under the edges. See here on how to do this: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GzTAZDsNBe0>

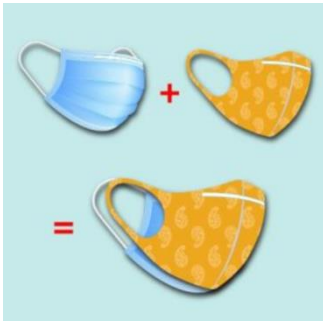


#### Check the fit of your mask:

- Check for gaps by cupping your hands around the outside edges of the mask. Make sure no air is flowing from the area near your eyes or from the sides of the mask.
- If the mask has a good fit, you will feel warm air come through the front of the mask and may be able to see the mask material move in and out with each breath.

### 2. **Improve the mask's level of filtration**

- Choose a mask with a higher level of protection (ideally a Level 3 medical/surgical mask that fits well to the face), **or**
- Add layers:
  - Wear a medical/surgical mask with a cloth mask ovetop (as seen in the photo below)
    - *Cloth masks should be washed after each use, while medical masks should be disposed of after each use. Always wash your hands after handling or touching a used mask. See [here](#) for more info on how to properly clean reusable masks.*



\*If using a cloth mask – choose one that is made with breathable, but tightly woven fabric (i.e., fabrics that do not let light pass through when held up to a light source), and is made with 2-3 layers of fabric\*

**\*\*When improving fit and filtration, ensure that breathing is not difficult, and that vision is not obstructed. Try it out at home first.\*\***

**\*\*Do not combine 2 medical masks, and do not combine KN95s with other masks.\*\***