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Are cloth face masks effective in the battle against COVID-19? | 1

Here at Voisin Law we hope to try and share with you key information each day that is being released by government. We will try to distil key messages and help guide you through these challenging times.

The Medical Officer of Health, Dr Ivan Muscat, has issued updated advice on covering the nose and mouth with cloth face masks when out in public. It has been made clear that although there is limited direct data on the use of cloth masks for COVID-19, there is good supportive evidence from other infections and good theoretical reasons to believe they will be helpful.

Dr Muscat said: "*Using cloth masks to cover your nose and mouth will reduce the transmission of large respiratory droplets from the person wearing the mask to others*".

It is now strongly recommended that non-medical face coverings are worn in public places while Islanders are observing Stay at Home guidance, particularly when shopping for essentials, and by essential workers where appropriate.

The guidance states that cloth face masks should:

- be used in public places
- be changed if soiled, wet or uncomfortable. Place used cloth masks in a plastic bag and take home for washing (ideally in a machine and tumble-dried, otherwise with detergent and hot water). Essential workers may need several masks a day to ensure good hygiene and comfort.

People wearing a mask should:

- wash hands after removing it
- remember that repeated washing may eventually degrade the material, reducing its effectiveness in stopping large respiratory particles. Sensible replacement of used masks is appropriate.