

*Towson University is a "mask-on" campus. Everyone is required to wear a mask or face covering within all buildings and outdoors when safe distancing is not possible. Some exceptions are in place. In the [Temporary COVID-19 Masking Protocol](#) it lists "active participation in a sanctioned athletic and/or Campus Recreation event or practice" as an exception. This exception is for designated practices and events only. Even with the exception, Campus Recreation is taking a phased approach to reopening for the health and safety of all patrons. Masks or face coverings will be required by Campus Recreation until further notice.*

### **Is it safe to wear a mask or face covering while exercising?**

For most people it is safe to wear a mask/face covering during exercise. People with cardiovascular or pulmonary conditions should consult with their physician before participating in physical activities such as exercise while wearing a mask/face covering.

### **What should I expect when exercising with a mask or face covering?**

When exercising with a mask/face covering it can feel more difficult to take a deep breath and to catch your breath following exercise. Duration of exercise and intensity should be decreased. A workout that was routine previously may seem more difficult when wearing a mask/face covering. Recovery time, the period of rest following exercise, will need to be increased to give the body more time to normalize respirations and heart rate. Common symptoms felt while exercising with a mask/face covering include dizziness, lightheaded, increased heart rate and difficulty catching breath. Self-limiting will be your best tool to avoid overexertion. If any of the symptoms above are felt, participants should allow time for rest and recovery until all symptom have resolved. When returning to the workout, intensity should be decreased. The body will adapt to the imposed stress over time. If symptoms continue or occur regularly, seek advice from a medical professional to rule out possible medical conditions.

Campus Recreation is creating recovery zones throughout the facility. These zones are spaces that will allow patrons who feel distressed to temporarily remove the mask/face covering for recovery. If symptoms arise from wearing a mask/face covering while exercising, simply move to a recovery zone and remove the mask/face covering to help ease the symptoms. While in the recovery zone, patrons will face the wall and stand on the designated marking. Once symptoms resolve, masks/face coverings will be replaced, and the patron will leave the recovery zone.

### **What type of mask or face covering should be used?**

Towson University has set specific criteria for masks/face coverings. Recognizing that masks or face coverings may vary, all must:

- Fit snugly and comfortably against the side of the face;
- Be secured with ties, strap(s), or ear loops OR be continuous piece of cloth that encircles the head while covering the nose and mouth;
- Cover the mouth AND nose (no mesh or open holes) and extend below the chin;
- Allow for breathing without restriction;
- Be able to be laundered without damage or change to shape; and
- Be consistent with USM Personnel Policy on Professional Conduct for Nonexempt and Exempt Staff, and/or the TU Code of Student Conduct

Campus Recreation recommendations for masks/face coverings during exercise:

- Look for multilayer masks/face coverings absent of valves as they provide the best protection for you and/or others around you
- Consider masks/face coverings which are created from lightweight and moisture wicking material
  - Materials that hold moisture will hold sweat during workouts
- Avoid masks/face coverings that may cause overheating due to excess fabric around the neck

- It is recommended to have multiple masks/face coverings available. The mask/face covering worn during exercise should not be the same mask/face covering worn while working or attending classes.

### **How should I remove a mask?**

Proper removal is just as critical as wearing the mask correctly. Remove the mask using the earpieces or straps, avoid touching the front portion of the mask. Wash or sanitize hands after removing the mask to ensure bacteria and virus are not transferred back onto the face.

### **How should I care for my mask or face covering?**

It is expected that each person will care, store and launder/clean their own mask or face covering. This should include:

- Avoid touching the mask or face covering and to wash hands frequently to prevent contamination
- Storing the mask or face covering in a paper bag when not in use;
- Washing a cloth mask or face covering after each daily use;
- Immediately replacing any mask or face covering that is soiled, damaged (ripped, punctured, broken strap(s), etc.), or visibly contaminated; and
- Limiting use of a disposable mask or face covering to no more than one per day.