

State mask mandates tied to drop in COVID-19 hospitalization growth rate

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(HealthDay)—Implementation of statewide mask mandates is associated

with a reduction in COVID-19-associated hospitalization growth rates, and mask use has been found to be high at universities, according to two studies published in the Feb. 5 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

Heesoo Joo, Ph.D., from the CDC COVID-19 Response Team, and colleagues examined the association between implementation of statewide mask mandates and COVID-19-associated hospitalization growth rates during March 1 to Oct. 17, 2020. The researchers found that during the first two weeks after implementing statewide mask mandates, weekly hospitalization growth rates decreased by 2.9 percent among adults aged 40 to 64 years. Hospitalization growth rates declined by 5.5 percent among those aged 18 to 39 and 40 to 64 years after mask mandates had been implemented for at least three weeks.

Lisa C. Barrios, Dr.P.H., from the CDC COVID-19 Emergency Response Team, and colleagues estimated the proportion of persons wearing [masks](#) and wearing masks correctly at six rural and suburban universities with mask mandates. Mask use was recorded for up to eight weeks by trained student observers. The researchers found that 85.5 percent of the 17,200 observed persons wore masks, with 89.7 percent wearing masks correctly (overall correct mask use, 76.7 percent). Overall, 91.7 percent wore masks correctly among persons observed indoors. There was variation noted in the proportion wearing masks correctly indoors by mask type, from 96.8 and 92.2 percent for N95-type masks and cloth masks, respectively, to 78.9 percent for bandanas, scarves, and similar face coverings.

"Direct observation at six universities indicated that mask use was high on campuses in locations where masks were mandated," Barrios and colleagues write.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text - Joo](#)

[Abstract/Full Text - Barrios](#)

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