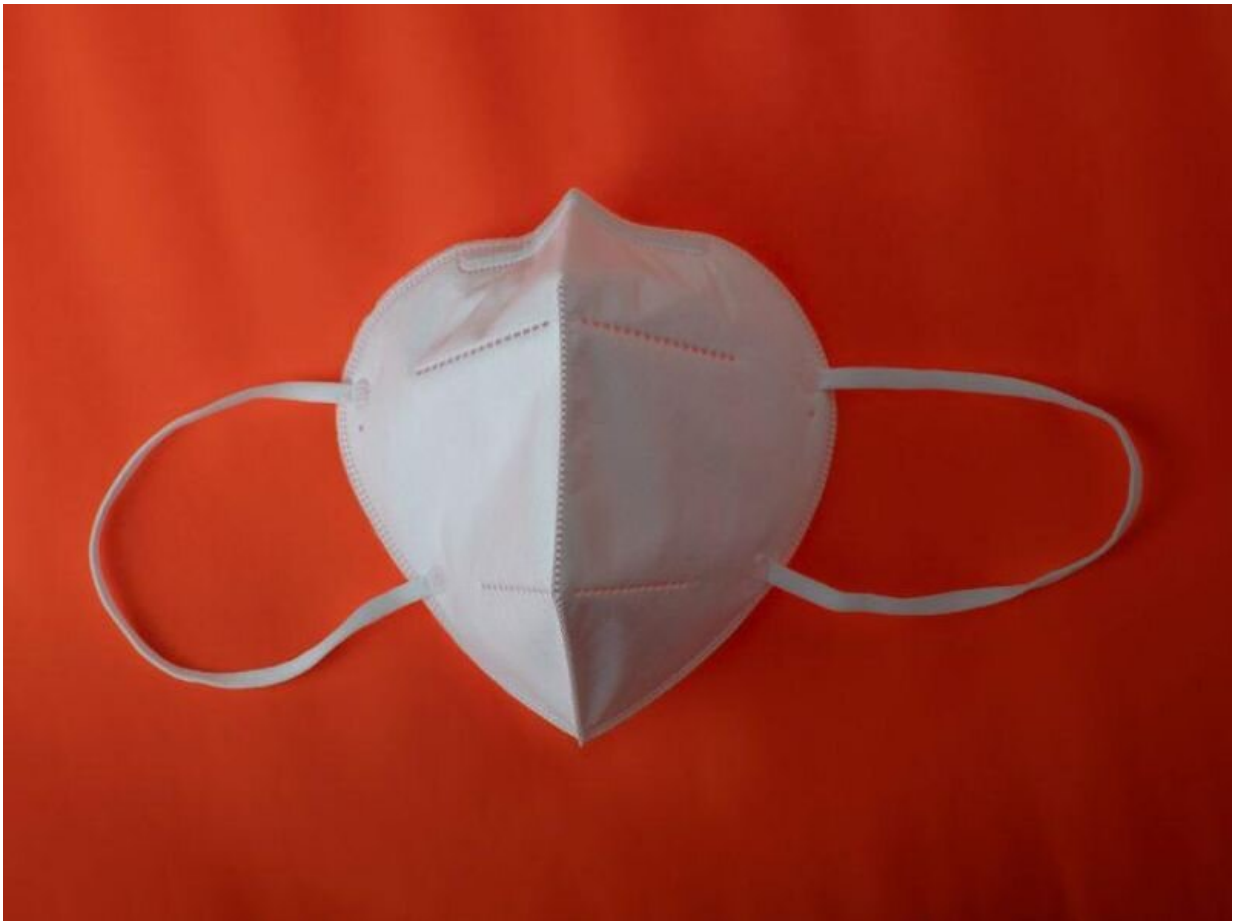


Free N95 masks begin arriving in U.S. pharmacies

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(HealthDay)—The distribution of free N95 masks for Americans has

begun, the Biden administration said Monday.

"Last week, [masks](#) began shipping and arriving at pharmacies and grocers around [the] country. We expect that throughout the week the number of stores and N95s arriving to scale up significantly," an [administration](#) official told *CNN*.

Masks already are set up for distribution at some Hy-Vee and Meijer grocery stores in the Midwest, with more coming at Southeastern Grocers stores later this week, *CNN* reported.

"I can confirm that we began receiving and distributing our first shipments of N95 masks from HHS on Friday, Jan. 21," Hy-Vee spokeswoman Christina Gaymen told *CNN*. "At this time, many Hy-Vee pharmacy locations have received and are distributing their mask allocations. We have received many positive comments from customers who are happy we have the masks and are distributing them so quickly. We still have masks available at all locations that have received them so far."

The administration [announced](#) last week that the program to distribute 400 million free masks to pharmacies and community [health centers](#) is expected to be in full swing by early February.

The masks are accompanied by flyers in both English and Spanish from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. "Mask up and maximize your protection," to "help slow the spread of COVID by protecting yourself and those around you," the flyer states.

Every person can have up to three free masks that include a QR code with instructions on proper use of the masks, as well as a [link](#) on mask usage from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The free masks—from the Strategic National Stockpile—will also start arriving at about 100 to 200 community [health](#) centers in the initial phase, according to the [Health Resources and Services Administration](#).

By mid-February, the agency anticipates that the masks will be available to all health centers, Amy Simmons Farber, a spokesperson for the National Association of Community Health Centers, told *CNN*.

The masks are being delivered just as the first round of free COVID tests are arriving in the mail for many Americans.

More information: Visit the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for more on [masks](#).

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