

Regarding COVID-19 Countermeasures Starting from March 13

A New Approach to **Mask Wearing**

▽ In the "Basic Response Policy" of the Japanese government, which was revised on February 10, the **approach to mask wearing** was revised. The **same changes** have been made to the **requests made by the prefectural government**. (Other requests will continue unrevised)

Content of the New Approach to Mask Wearing

Until March 12		Starting from March 13																			
<p>Basic rules: Wear a mask depending on if you are indoors or outdoors, your distance between other people, and if you are speaking</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Outdoors</th> <th>Distant</th> <th>Close</th> <th>Indoors</th> <th>Distant</th> <th>Close</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Speaking</td> <td>No</td> <td>Yes</td> <td>Speaking</td> <td>Yes</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Not speaking</td> <td>No</td> <td>No</td> <td>Not speaking</td> <td>No</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Outdoors	Distant	Close	Indoors	Distant	Close	Speaking	No	Yes	Speaking	Yes	Yes	Not speaking	No	No	Not speaking	No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○The wearing of masks will be left to individual judgment. (Refer to the "Situations Where Wearing Masks is Effective" (next page) and other information provided by the Japanese government when making a decision.) ○No one should be forced to take off a mask or put one on against their will. However, businesses are allowed to ask that customers and employees wear masks. ○Basic infection prevention measures other than wearing masks, such as ventilation, avoiding the three C's, social distancing, hand hygiene, etc., should continue to be encouraged. 	
Outdoors	Distant	Close	Indoors	Distant	Close																
Speaking	No	Yes	Speaking	Yes	Yes																
Not speaking	No	No	Not speaking	No	Yes																
<p>For children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○Mask wearing is not recommended for children under 2 ○It is not uniformly required for children over 2 to wear a mask 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○Mask wearing is not recommended for children under 2 ○It is not required for children over 2 to wear a mask ○Be considerate toward parents and children who are worried about the risk of infection and choose to continue wearing masks 																			
Until March 31 <small>※For graduation ceremonies even before April 1, the basic rule is no masks</small>		Starting from April 1																			
<p>For schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○Instruct students to wear masks when sufficient physical distance cannot be maintained (Masks are removed during physical education and summer months) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○The basic rule will be not requiring the wearing of masks. Even in situations where masking is encouraged due to the spread of infection, respect the independent judgment of students and their parents/guardians. ○Be considerate towards students who wish to continue wearing a mask due to various circumstances. 																			

Situations Where Wearing Masks is Effective, as Announced by the Japanese Government

① Situations Where Wearing a Mask is Effective

In order to prevent infection among the elderly and others at high risk of serious illness, **it is recommended that masks be worn** in the following situations where masks are effective

- When visiting a medical institution
- When visiting medical institutions or facilities for the elderly where there are many people at high risk of serious illness
- When boarding a crowded train or bus during a crowded time, such as rush hour, for the time being (Excluding vehicles that can seat all passengers such as the bullet train, commuter liners, express busses, chartered busses, etc.)
- For those who are at a high risk of serious illness, wear a mask when going to a crowded place during periods when the infection rate for COVID-19 is high
- When working at medical institutions or facilities for the elderly where many people at high risk of serious illness are hospitalized or living.

② If You Have Symptoms

Symptomatic persons, persons who have tested positive for COVID-19, and persons living with a family member who has tested positive for COVID-19 **should refrain from going outside** to avoid spreading the infection to others.

If you have to go out for unavoidable reasons, such as going to the hospital, **avoid crowded places** and **wear a mask**.

Content of Infection Prevention Requests for **Prefectural Residents** 【All Regions】

Starting from March 13, 2023

【Maintain Medical System Functions】

- Non-high-risk individuals should conduct **self-testing with a test kit** or use the Support Center for Infected Individuals
- To reduce the strain on medical facilities, **use emergency rooms and ambulances responsibly**

【Infection Prevention Measures】

- **Every resident of the prefecture should thoroughly implement basic infection prevention measures**, such as effective ventilation and following other basic hygienic practices such as washing hands
- **Wearing a mask will be left to individual judgment**, and **no one should be forced to put on a mask or take one off against their will.**
- Prepare over-the-counter medications, antigen test kits, food, and daily necessities in case of infection
- Take care of your daily health, and refrain from going out, going to work, school, nursery school, etc. **if you are feeling unwell.**
- Refrain from activities that could lead to the spread of infection, such as going out to places with a high risk of infection, to protect yourself and your family, etc.
- **Get vaccinated with the Omicron vaccine** as soon as possible
- **Guardians of children between 6 months to 11 years old should consider getting their children vaccinated**
- Use eating/dining establishments that have **taken appropriate infection prevention measures**, such as Ninshoten[※] and **cooperate with infection prevention measures**
- **When traveling between prefectures or participating in large events**, thoroughly implement basic infection prevention measures **and follow the infection prevention measures at your destination**
- After coming into **contact with an infected person**, get **tested as soon as possible**. If you will come into **contact with the elderly or people with underlying medical conditions** during your travels, **get tested in advance**. Residents of elderly care facilities etc., should **get tested** when visiting family home.

※Ninshoten are dining/drinking establishments recognized under the Miyagi Restaurant COVID-19 Countermeasures System