



As together we make our way through the COVID-19 pandemic, USA Hockey has been asked if wearing a helmet with a full clear shield is better than a visor (half shield) or cage. In addition, many are asking about players wearing a face mask to cover their mouth/nose while practicing or in games. Below is information that we hope is helpful.

HELMETS -- FULL CLEAR SHIELD vs. HALF SHIELD OR CAGE

There is no scientific proof that a full clear shield on a hockey helmet provides better protection against infectious diseases compared to a visor (half shield) or cage.

That said, a full clear shield is *likely* better than a visor (half shield) or cage:

1. Can act as a barrier in case someone in close proximity coughs or sneezes
2. May be a deterrent to decrease touch of the face (vs. cages where players stick their fingers through the cage)
3. Likely to prevent spitting on the ice/bench (should be enforced regardless)

It should be noted that a full clear shield *will not* prevent the inhalation of aerosolized droplets.

And it is important that regardless of what kind of mask a player wears that it be cleaned thoroughly after each use.



Examples of facemasks on hockey helmets above from left to right: visor/half shield; cage; full clear shield

MASKS TO COVER MOUTH/NOSE

A cloth mask protects the wearer's nose and mouth from contact with droplets and may protect others by reducing exposure to the saliva and respiratory secretions of the mask wearer. This is especially important if someone is infected but does not have symptoms.

Players should wear cloth masks at all times, except while playing. Coaches and other support personnel should wear cloth masks at all times.

Wearing a cloth mask during high intensity aerobic activity is not recommended by the CDC due to decreased oxygen inhalation and decreased carbon dioxide exhalation.