

## Air Travel and Facemasks

Many residents have asked if they should use a face mask if they must travel on an airplane in the near future.

Here are things to keep in mind when traveling by plane:

- If symptoms of swine influenza 2 develop during flight, the ill person should wear a surgical mask to reduce the number of droplets coughed or sneezed into the air.
- At a minimum, airline crew assisting that person should also wear facemasks. Ideally, they should use a facemask (e.g. respirator) rated N-95 or higher. Respirators optimally require fit testing; proper use is recommended to maximize effectiveness.
- While facemasks provide barrier protection against droplet and contact transmission of the virus, they do not protect against inhalation of very small airborne particles.
- Disposable facemasks and respirators should not be reused. Once removed, they should be discarded.

**Note:** Remember, surgical face masks provide barrier protection against droplet and contact transmission of the virus; they do not protect against inhalation of very small airborne particles. Respirators like the N95 provide protection against fine airborne droplet transmission of the virus.

More information about facemasks and respirators can be found at [www.cdc.gov/swineflu](http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu).