COVID-19 Improved Mask Protection

The combination of a tight-fitting surgical mask with a fitted reusable face covering is very effective in reducing exhaled respiratory droplets/aerosols from infected wearers and reducing exposure of uninfected wearers to these particles.

Layering
According to the CDC:

• Adding a resuable face covering over a surgical mask could reduce a wearer’s exposure by more than 90%.
• Wearing a mask fitter or brace over a surgical mask can potentially increase a wearer’s protection by more than 90%.
• Viral transmission/exposure may be reduced by 95% or more when all individuals wear double masks that are fitted.

Fitting
Follow these steps to fit a mask snugly.

1. Fit surgical mask snugly over mouth, nose, and chin with color side facing outward by:
   a. Knotting ear loops where they join the edge of the surgical mask.
   b. Folding and tucking excess material under the mask edges.
   NOTE: A mask fitter or brace may be used instead.
2. Press the thin metal wire (along the upper edge of the mask) gently to conform to the bridge of the nose.
3. Cup your hands around outside edges of mask to check for gaps. Air should not enter or escape out the sides of the mask.
4. Wear a fitted reusable face covering over the surgical mask. The face covering should push the edges of the inner mask against the face unless a mask fitter or brace is employed.

Storing
1. To doff surgical mask and face covering, remove by the straps; do not touch surfaces of the masks.
2. Carefully fold the outer surface inward against itself to reduce contact with other surfaces during storage. The folded mask can be stored between uses in a clean sealable paper bag or breathable container.

Resources
CDC - Improve How Your Mask Protects You
Maximizing Fit for Cloth and Medical...Masks
Cloth Face Covers
LACDPH - Guidance for Cloth Face Coverings
EH&S - PPE Risk Matrix

Remember...
Remember to practice hand hygiene after touching or adjusting your mask and face covering. Wash hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based sanitizer.