

## Twitter Thread by Abraar Karan



**Abraar Karan**

@AbraarKaran



### 1/ #BetterMasks - why and how

**First, why do we even need high-filtration masks right now?**

**Increasingly, we are going to be (or already are) in crowded, poorly ventilated spaces- groceries, public transit, work, school etc**  
**#covid19**

Short\u0001f9f5

1/

So @CDCgov on their \u201cYour Guide to Masks\u201d has a section saying don\u2019t use N95s or surgical masks for the general public bc they are reserved for healthcare workers. That is their reason. They invoke a \*shortage of supply\* as their main rationale<https://t.co/h6EnRo7Mge> [pic.twitter.com/81L30YziaR](https://t.co/h6EnRo7Mge)

— Abraar Karan (@AbraarKaran) January 15, 2021

2/ If can agree that we need these...what qualities should these masks have?

We talk about that in our @HarvardBiz piece on #BetterMasks

Fit

Filtration

Comfort

Affordability

Scalability

Style

#covid19

<https://t.co/SZ451BIIYN>

3/ Given huge delays in getting any of this done...what options are available right now, off the shelf?

One of these - elastomeric (eN95s) which are used in different industries and were used by some hospitals can get job done

#covid19

<https://t.co/GkiuRcfSIP>

4/ Many have pointed to the issue of the exhale valves-- actually, even this issue has been studied by CDC/NIOSH, report below

Apparently source control can still be better than surgical masks or cloth masks even w/ these

#covid19

<https://t.co/xsS23xgvtn>

They have actually recently studied this topic & found some surprising results here.

<https://t.co/SgmAji7uzm> [pic.twitter.com/oM2npADeFo](https://t.co/oM2npADeFo)

— Abraar Karan (@AbraarKaran) [January 15, 2021](#)

5/ Additionally, many have rightfully mentioned KF94 and KN95s

There have been some issues around counterfeits

CDC has a list of some that have definitely run into these issues (check the list if you have any of these, may need to contact company)

<https://t.co/gFbgPDxh1l>

## COUNTERFEIT MASKS

As we keep pushing toward access to better masks, critical to avoid counterfeits on the market. I found a list here by CDC \u2014 these are mostly real KN95 manufacturers in China who have reported being counterfeited [#covid19](#)

<https://t.co/c6hdDa8nqq> [pic.twitter.com/nAlpqfzBW0](https://t.co/nAlpqfzBW0)

— Abraar Karan (@AbraarKaran) [January 14, 2021](#)

6/ Many are aware that higher filtration masks are the best personal protection we can get at this time, including President [@JoeBiden](#)

No silver bullets, but these are critical in addition to vaccines, T/T/I, ventilation etc [#covid19](#)

<https://t.co/Mr3FV7TP7M>

President [@JoeBiden](#) takes all precautions\u2014 seen multiple times wearing an N95 mask + surgical mask over it.

We are pushing a proposal to [@Transition46](#) soon calling for [#BetterMasks](#) for \*all Americans\* [#covid19](#)

<https://t.co/qxim99QWVb> [pic.twitter.com/OjhY7arC3u](https://t.co/OjhY7arC3u)

— Abraar Karan (@AbraarKaran) [January 14, 2021](#)

7/ Some home-made options exist & many smart people have studied these & have been trying to MacGyver their own

I commend these people- but it shouldn't have to be this way.

We are 11 months into this pandemic.

We have known this is an issue.

<https://t.co/VkiLuLJTOK>

.@KatherineJWu on #BetterMasks here in @nytimes referencing recent review from @linseymarr & @MonicaGandhi9 ; yes, there are home-made immediate solutions & also should have an organized public health approach as other countries have done. <https://t.co/3uQrjUfni5> [pic.twitter.com/CLq1u8hzWV](https://t.co/CLq1u8hzWV)

— Abraar Karan (@AbraarKaran) [January 14, 2021](#)

8/ Some places, like Bavaria in Germany, have actually started to make FFP2 (their N95 equivalent) \*mandatory\* when using transit or in grocery stores

This is key- using HiFi masks in places w/ highest risk of transmission from both droplets + aerosols

<https://t.co/AoV9La09KA>

Southern German state of Bavaria makes N95 masks \*mandatory\* (their version called FFP2) when using public transport or entering retail stores. #covid19 h/t @sri\_srikrishna <https://t.co/1dj4PE69gL> [pic.twitter.com/XLsrlbLLLy](https://t.co/XLsrlbLLLy)

— Abraar Karan (@AbraarKaran) [January 14, 2021](#)

9/ But- just saying you need to wear #BetterMasks or even mandating them without helping people get access to these- ideally for free-- is unacceptable & will worsen health inequities. #covid19

<https://t.co/XwiGA1CVUs>

Agree w/ this\u2014 need to make sure these masks are free to the public! #covid19 #betterMasks #Bavaria <https://t.co/g54LC9zGk3> [pic.twitter.com/kJHMmQ6QIG](https://t.co/kJHMmQ6QIG)

— Abraar Karan (@AbraarKaran) [January 14, 2021](#)

10/ Some governments, like Austria's, are actually sending these hi-fi masks for free to their highest risk citizens- those 65+ year of age

Even if we can get better masks to high risk folks + those in frontline jobs, that would be huge

But ideally more

<https://t.co/4GPDnfEoBT>

Austrian government to distribute free FFP2 (their \u201cN95\u201d caliber masks) to citizens above age 65 years of age for added protection. [#covid19](#) [#BetterMasks](#) <https://t.co/m6JtWGARCP> [pic.twitter.com/bqid9W6CWY](https://pic.twitter.com/bqid9W6CWY)

— Abraar Karan (@AbraarKaran) [January 15, 2021](#)

11/ Hong Kong got a 6 layer re-usable mask out to people; free w/ national ID card; ability to insert better filters for when you're in crowded spaces; distributed from post offices

[#covid19](#)

<https://t.co/4WPhbHo9YO>

FREE 6 layer reusable masks in Hong Kong for their citizens, collected right at post office with your identity card.

the CuMask+[#covid19](#) <https://t.co/d0Pue9tllZ> [pic.twitter.com/T1FLw8pk2O](https://pic.twitter.com/T1FLw8pk2O)

— Abraar Karan (@AbraarKaran) [January 11, 2021](#)

12/ Singapore has something similar, given out through vending machines

It's a mask kit- 2 reusable masks, 3 reusable filters

They have distributed this 3 times now (maybe more since that article was written, not sure)

[#covid19](#)

<https://t.co/ScAuQuvDzt>

This was brought to my attention tonight\u2014Singapore literally has reusable 3-layer masks distributed FREE to its citizens.

You use your national ID card at a vending machine and pick up your mask kit. [#covid19](#) [pic.twitter.com/ZY9Lf5izWp](https://pic.twitter.com/ZY9Lf5izWp)

— Abraar Karan (@AbraarKaran) [January 10, 2021](#)

13/ Our latest piece in [@statnews](#) talks about what the [@JoeBiden](#) team needs to do

Ideally, you would be able to pick up your mask kit in convenient places or have it shipped right to you

More soon from [@sri\\_srikrishna](#) [@RanuDhillon](#) & me

[#BetterMasks](#)

<https://t.co/fGA1zoM7Eu>

14/ As expected, over time, more transmissible variants such as #B117 will outcompete older ones; and at a later time, some variants may do better at evading our immune response.

When that happens, having a #bettermask on will be key.

[#covid19](#)

