

"Should I Wear a Mask When I Practise Tai Chi?"

As a Tai Chi practitioner of long standing and retired Medical Herbalist and physiology lecturer, I feel it is now incumbent upon me to point out that mask wearing, beyond a clinical environment, is absolutely against the principles of health and wellbeing associated with Tai Chi and Chi Gung and all the principle of health I have learned in my studies of anatomy and physiology, Health Science and Herbal Medicine.

I am often asked by students, "Should I wear a mask when practising?" Having understood the lessons of my teachers about the importance of unrestricted breathing of fresh air and correct breathing methods being essential to the body's natural energy (Chi) balance and flow and having shared their theories and methods of practice for over half of my life, my response must be that especially when practising Tai Chi and Chi Gung, it is best not to wear a mask.

I am frequently asked why I do not wear a mask, well, in deference to sick folk and in some medically necessary situations, I do, but not in everyday general community environments where I feel it to be unnecessary. The reasons I am opposed to default mask wearing are firstly, it distresses me greatly for several reasons, the major ones being that it inhibits my natural respiration, is inimical to personal air hunger requirements and is detrimental to my health. Secondly, the trend of default mask-wearing seems to be continuing and likely to become part of our - currently in its infancy - fearful, anxious, and obese identity to the detriment of our present and future common welfare.*

Following on from this initial question, I am then often asked, "Are you not frightened of catching covid?". The answer is yes, and I am also frightened of catching flu, norovirus, other coronaviruses like colds, strep throat, TB, etc. but other than putting a scarf over my face in winter sometimes, I have never worn a mask in the past and I am not going to begin to do so after 70 years!

I must add that it is none of my business whether anyone else wears a mask or not, and I am not attempting to stop people so doing. That is a matter of personal choice, and I would not wish to infringe upon another's personal risk management. I have my opinions about the current trend, which if you wish to read on you might glean.

My teachers' lessons with regard to breathing are for me, without doubt, of great value and you might already know about some points from our sessions or can find out about some of them in [Understanding Chi Gung](#) or [Tai Chi for you](#). From this natural approach to health, notwithstanding their medical use and their arguable usefulness as an interim measure, regarding long-term use, I certainly consider masks inimical to physical and mental health.

You might then wish to further read just the additional three-page summary, *Mask wearing for reducing transmission and infection of SARS-CoV-2: Some Considerations*, or if you are interested, you might wish to read the overly-long additional discussions *Mask wearing for reducing transmission and infection of SARS-CoV-2: Are they effective?* and *Masks wearing by the general public: benefits and disadvantages*, about the issues surrounding mask wearing, which I feel are important in making an informed personal assessment of this supposed health intervention. If you would like a PDF, you can email me at thegreenman2591@gmail.com

These additional texts on the topic are addressed mainly to examine why continual mask-wearing in a non-clinical environment might not be a good idea from a Western scientific viewpoint. However, it is interspersed with personal comment so please forgive my impertinence for thinking that my opinion might be of any worth.

*To examine this issue and my opinion of the flawed nature of the covid debacle and suggestions about how it might have been rationally addressed, you can access my small book [Support of Health and Wellbeing: Rational Disease Resistance](#) available on Amazon, or you are [most welcome](#) to a free, sharable, PDF version by emailing thegreenman2591@gmail.com