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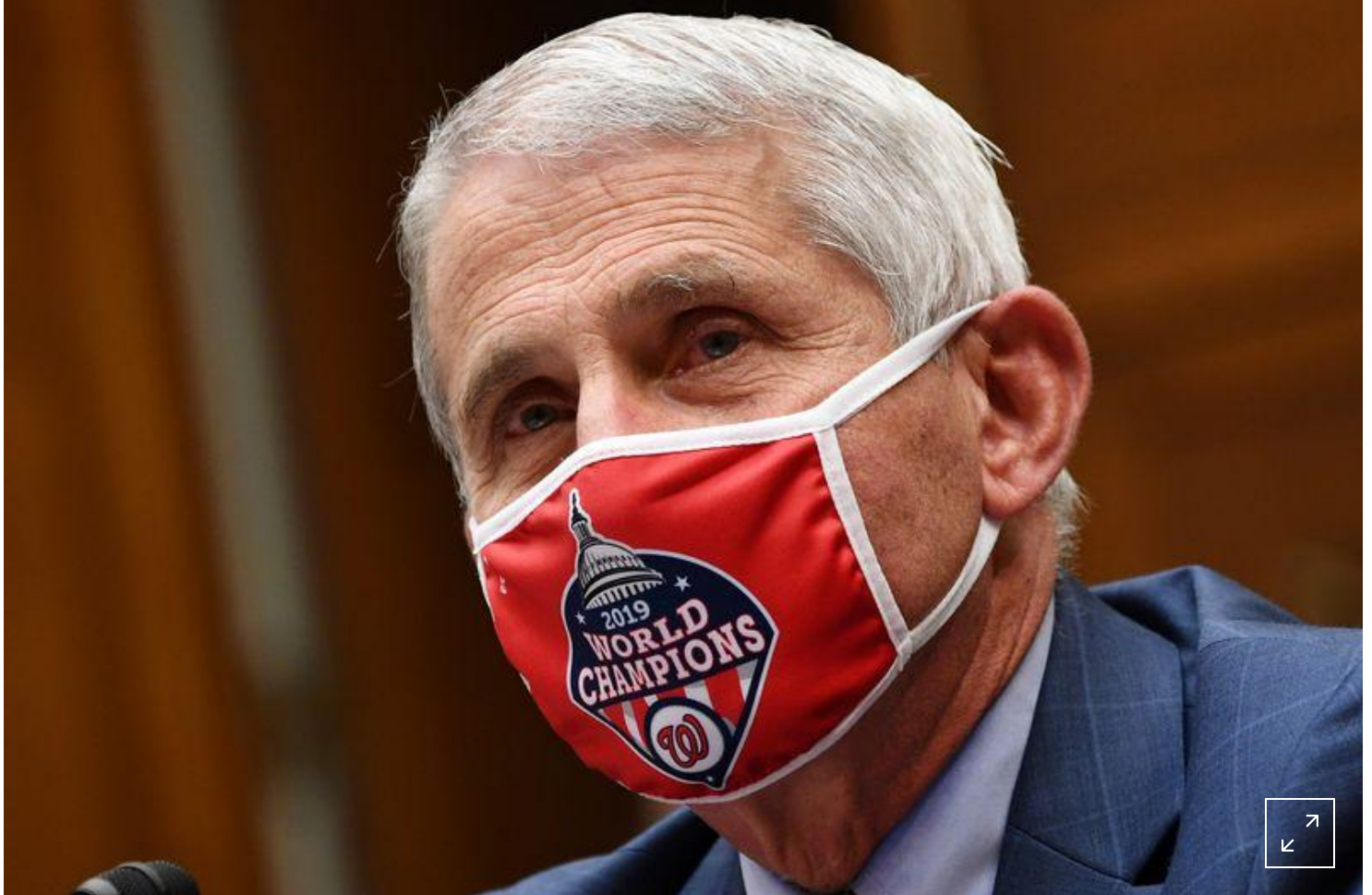
Fact check: Outdated video of Fauci saying “there’s no reason to be walking around with a mask”

By Reuters Staff

5 MIN READ



A video circulating on social media shows Dr Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), saying “there’s no reason to be walking around with a mask.” Fauci’s remarks were made on March 8, 2020 and do not represent his current stance on face coverings nor the updated guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).



Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, wears a Washington Nationals protective mask during a House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis hearing in Washington, D.C., U.S., July 31, 2020. Kevin Dietsch/Pool via REUTERS

A post made on Oct. 2 featuring this old video is visible [here](#) .

In the clip, Dr Fauci says “There’s no reason to be walking around with a mask. When you’re in the middle of an outbreak, wearing a mask might make people feel a little bit better and it might even block a droplet, but it’s not providing the perfect protection that people think that it is. And, often, there are unintended consequences — people keep fiddling with the mask and they keep touching their face.”

Fauci made this comment on an interview with 60 Minutes on March 8, during the early stages of the novel coronavirus outbreak in the United States. A longer extract of the interview is visible youtu.be/PRa6t_e7dgI (see 30-second mark).

The interview predates the CDC's updated guidance on the use of face coverings. On April 3, 2020, the CDC updated its previous advice and recommended people wear cloth face coverings “in public settings when around people outside their household, especially when social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.”

CDC's latest guidance on face coverings is visible [here](#) . As of this fact check's publication, the CDC recommendation remains almost the same. They note children under the age of 2, people who have trouble breathing, are unconscious or incapacitated should not wear a mask (archive.vn/wip/TY8JR).

As Fauci told the Washington Post [here](#) , at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, masks were not recommended for the general public, as authorities were trying to prevent a mask shortage for health workers and the extent of asymptomatic spread was unknown.

As more information became available about SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, health authorities and organizations around the world have changed their stance towards the impact of face masks and the spread of the disease ([here](#)).

As of the publishing of this fact check, Fauci is encouraging people to wear face coverings. Fauci has reaffirmed this stance on interviews on Sept. 21, Aug. 10 and Aug. 5 that are visible here (bit.ly/3dbpHsA , bit.ly/36GS9Bz , bit.ly/2GKAw94)

Reuters has fact-checked outdated medical guidance being shared as if current and misleading people, examples are visible [here](#) , [here](#) , [here](#) , [here](#) .

VERDICT