

**From:** Fauci, Anthony (NIH/NIAID) [E]  
**Sent:** Wed, 5 Feb 2020 03:48:11 +0000  
**To:** Sylvia Burwell  
**Subject:** RE: A couple of quick questions.

Sylvia:

Masks are really for infected people to prevent them from spreading infection to people who are not infected rather than protecting uninfected people from acquiring infection. The typical mask you buy in the drug store is not really effective in keeping out virus, which is small enough to pass through the material. It might, however, provide some slight benefit in keep out gross droplets if someone coughs or sneezes on you. I do not recommend that you wear a mask, particularly since you are going to a vey low risk location. Your instincts are correct, money is best spent on medical countermeasures such as diagnostics and vaccines.

Safe travels.

Best regards,  
Tony