

NEWS

Busan city unites to battle COVID-19 crisis

The spread of COVID-19 in Busan and South Korea has eased somewhat, and many in the city are trying to return to their normal lives. Even though the country has not been hit as hard as nations like Italy, cases are still increasing, and it is important for South Korea to keep its guard up. Busan has been doing its part to help contain the spread of COVID-19.



Busan mayor Oh Keodon fist bumps a medical professional in a sign of support and solidarity.

■ Medical and treatment systems

Busan has focused its local medical system and strengthened quarantine measures. With the number of new homegrown cases slowing somewhat, the city is now focusing on preventing the spread of infection within the local community and is coming up with methods of containment.

In addition, City Hall is operating a new treatment system. The Busan Medical Center is focusing on patients with slight symptoms, while the university hospitals are on the frontlines of more serious cases. City Hall is also taking part in quarantine and disinfection activities at locations visited by confirmed patients.

■ Drive-through facilities

South Korea is now operating drive-through testing facilities. Those who suspect themselves of having COVID-19 may take their personal vehicle to a testing site and get tested in less than 10 minutes. Medical professionals on site will provide those in their cars with a consultation, a medical report, sample collection and a list of precautions.

Drive-through testing sites in

Busan are located at Hwamyeong Stadium, the outdoor parking lot of Busan Citizens Park and the Haeundae-gu community health center.

■ Mask rations

One of the biggest developments over the course of the last several weeks has been the nation's decision to ration up to two masks per person per week. The day in which an individual may buy masks is dependent on date of birth (those born in years ending in zero or five may buy masks on Friday, for example). Foreigners are able to purchase masks on their designated days if they are enrolled in the NHIS and present both their health insurance and alien registration cards.

Real-time updates pertaining to masks are available on City Hall's official website at busan.go.kr/maskinfo.

■ Clean zones

In the interest of easing public anxiety, Busan is designating certain areas as "clean zones." These areas are locations that health centers and



Drive-through clinics provide speedy testing (top); disinfected clean zones offer residents safety (middle); women in the Korean Red Cross make cookies for medical staff (bottom).

tamination. Locations that have undergone this process can receive certification visible to the public. As of March 26, 276 restaurants, shops and public venues in Busan have been designated as clean zones.

■ Busan fights back

South Korea has united to weather the COVID-19 crisis, and the local Busan community has been coming together to contain the spread of the virus, as well. It is happening on business and personal levels, as both companies and citizens have donated goods and money to people suffering from the pandemic. One women's association in the city made 100,000 masks and delivered them to many in need.

Those in humanitarian and government sectors are getting involved, too. The Korean Red Cross did its part by making cookies for medical staff. To overcome the shortage of blood, local firemen came together to donate their own. Busan City Hall has also been helping out in this way by delivering aid to affected shopping districts, low-income senior citizens and small businesses in need.



FAQ 『Masks』

(Source: Ministry of Food and Drug Safety and KCDC)

Q. Are disposable masks reusable?

A. It's not ideal, but in times like these, they can be, as long as you put your mask in a well-ventilated area after wearing it. Do not use a hair dryer or microwave to clean it, as it will weaken the mask.

Q. Are cotton masks effective?

A. Cotton masks are fine, because they prevent droplets from coming in contact with others. If you are likely to be infected or have an underlying health condition, however, you must wear a filtered mask.

Q. Should I wear a mask indoors?

A. Wearing a mask is not needed anywhere, as long as there are no crowds. This is especially true in areas with good ventilation. But, it is recommended to wear a mask when you are in poor health, have pre-existing medical conditions or come within two meters of others in an area that is not well ventilated.

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