

Use of Personal Protective Equipment

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is a type of specialized clothing, barrier product, or breathing device used to protect workers from serious injuries or illnesses while doing their jobs. These include gloves (vinyl, latex or nitrile); gowns; shoe and head covers; mask or respirators (N95 respirator); and other face and eye protection (goggles or a face shield).

Respiratory Selection

Remember the COVID-19 Virus is transferred by infected individuals coughing, sneezing, spitting out their respiratory droplets into the air. These droplets can be inhaled by an unprotected person if not social distancing or they will land on surfaces nearby which are now contaminated with the COVID-19 virus for up to 5-7 days depending on the surface type.

Surgical Masks

Cannot be fit tested and have some leakage. Prevent you from spreading your germs and virus to others; they can become saturated with your saliva and then have potential to get wet on the outside from another source and transfer that moisture through the mask into your respiratory system. Should be one time use only as the outside surface cannot be washed and the COVID-19 Virus may have impacted onto the outside of the mask. Wash your hands after removing.

N-95 Masks/KN95 Masks

Can be fit tested and proven to show that no respiratory droplets can enter the respiratory system. Prevent you from contracting and/or spreading any viral infections. Could be re-used if care is taken during the doffing process to not touch fingers inside the mask, immediately wash hands after removal. When re-donning the mask ensure your hands after touching the outside of the mask do not touch your eyes, mouth, nose before you wash them. Prolonged use is preferred over re-use.

Half Mask or Full Mask Respirator with P-100 Cartridges (Hard Shell)

Can be fit tested with the purple hard shell cartridge and eliminates any viral infections from entering the respiratory tract. Can be reused many times as the P-100 HEPA Cartridge inside the purple casing is not likely to ever become saturated with someone else's water droplets. The person wearing the mask has no worries of touching the HEPA paper filter cartridge inside the mask as it is not accessible because of the purple hard casing. The mask must be cleaned after every usage by following these guidelines;

- 1) Remove cartridges from mask.
- 2) Saturate a paper cloth in hand sanitizing solution and wipe down the outside of both HEPA Cartridges.
- 3) Submerge North Face Mask in hot water with dish soap and completely wash the outside and inside of the mask thoroughly.
- 4) Let items dry.
- 5) Screw cartridges back onto mask and store in plastic bag or clean area until next use.

Note: If using the **Cloth P-100 Cartridges** they would be potentially contaminated after an exposure to COVID-19 and cannot be cleaned. Disposal is required.

Use of Fabric or Cloth Masks

Homemade masks made out of fabric and cloth are not considered PPE. However, homemade masks can be an effective complement to hand washing, social-distancing and other mitigation measures. Homemade masks limit the spread of infectious droplets in the air by containing coughs and sneezes. When a homemade mask can't be acquired a scarf or bandana can be utilized. By implementing community use of these homemade fabric or cloth masks, everyone will have a higher degree of protection from this virus.

How to Make a Homemade Mask out of Fabric or Cloth:

Below are instructions on how to make a mask at home.

Materials needed:

Fabric (100% cotton is most effective)

Fabric Ties

Scissors

Sewing machine or a needle and thread

Instructions:

Measure and cut two pieces of fabric in a rectangle pattern to fit snugly around the face (size 12 inches by 6 inches is standard for adults)

Tightly sew both layers together on all edges

Cut fabric ties to fit around the ears

Sew the ties to the insides of the mask on the smaller edge, repeat on both sides

Resew the sides to ensure a tight seal between both pieces of fabric and the earpiece

Tutorials/Resources for Making your Own Mask:

- <https://www.nytimes.com/article/how-to-make-face-mask-coronavirus.html>

Best Practices for Homemade Masks:

The best practices for making and wearing fabric or cloth masks include:

- Consider buying materials online to avoid exposure in public places;
- Purchase masks made by small businesses, saving medical masks for health care workers;
- Before putting on a mask, clean hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water;
- The mask should fit snugly around the mouth and nose;
- If the mask has a metal wire it should be fitted snugly to the bridge of the nose.
- Avoid touching the mask while using it, if you do wash your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub;
- Made out of two layers of tightly woven 100% cotton fabric;
- Be discarded or washed after every use;
- Should not be worn damp or when wet from spit or mucus;
- To remove the mask: remove it from behind, do not touch the front of mask;
- The wearer should immediately wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds after removing the mask.

My Mask Protects You, Your Mask Protects Me

Those who are staying home and have no close contacts who are infected with COVID-19 don't need a mask most of the time. However, wearing a nonmedical or homemade mask may be helpful in certain situations or for certain populations*.

- Shopping at essential businesses, like grocery stores or pharmacies;
- While visiting your health care provider;
- Traveling on public transportation;
- Interacting with customers/clients at essential businesses;
- When feeling sick, coughing, or sneezing;

Because homemade masks protect everyone else from the droplets created by the wearer, it is important that as many people as possible wear these masks when leaving their homes. This helps prevent those who may be infectious but are only mildly symptomatic or not symptomatic from spreading the virus to others in the community. Everyone should remember the phrase "my mask protects you, your mask protects me." By increasing the overall number of people who are containing their coughs, sneezes, and other droplets, it will help us control the overall spread of the virus.

How to Maximize Prevention Efforts:

Wearing a mask alone is not effective in reducing transmission of COVID-19. The below recommendations should be followed by everyone to help slow the spread of and minimize exposure to COVID-19.

- Practice social distancing, meaning staying at least 6 feet apart from others when in public or outdoors;
- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, or using hand sanitizer when soap and water is not immediately available;
- Cover coughs and sneezes with your elbow;
- Avoid touching your face;
- Regularly clean and disinfect surfaces;
- Stay home and limit public outings to only essential, life-sustaining activities.

Additional Information

- If social distancing can be maintained, no mask is required.
- If social distancing cannot be maintained with no positively diagnosed persons nearby, the surgical mask or N-95 is valid.
- If in areas where positive COVID-19 cases are present and/or nearby; wear the N-95 or North ½ mask with P-100 cartridges
- If working for prolonged periods where positive COVID-19 cases are present and nearby, wear the N-95 or North ½ mask with P-100 cartridges. Follow re-use or cleaning directions.

Understanding the Difference: N95, Surgical Mask and Face Coverings

<p>Mask Type</p>	<p>N95 Respirator</p>  <p>KN95 respirators are accepted alternatives</p>	<p>Half Mask or Full Mask Respirator with P100</p> 	<p>Surgical Mask</p> 	<p>Homemade Mask or Paper Mask</p> 
<p>Risk Factor</p>	<p>High Risk Situations</p>	<p>High Risk Situations</p>	<p>Moderate to High Risk Situations</p>	<p>Low Risk Situations</p>
<p>Design</p>	<p>Designed to protect the person wearing the mask from aerosols, splatter, sprays, or blood.</p> <p>KN95 are not CSA or NIOSH approved.</p>	<p>Effective at blocking 99.97 percent of oil-based and non-oil based particulates when properly worn. They can protect wearers from exposure to dust, fumes and hazardous mists.</p>	<p>Acts as a barrier between the nose and mouth of the wearer and the environment</p>	<p>Designed to contain coughs and sneezes and prevent disease transmission to others</p> <p>– NOT to protect the wearer from breathing in aerosols.</p>
<p>When To Wear</p>	<p>Required for use when physical distancing is not achievable</p> <p>Required for use in areas of known COVID-19 cases</p> <p>Required for use during disinfecting/sanitizing of a location</p>	<p>Required for use when physical distancing is not achievable</p> <p>Required for use in areas of known COVID-19 cases</p> <p>Required for use during disinfecting/sanitizing of a location</p>	<p>Surgical masks are recommended when N95s are not available.</p>	<p>Recommended for use when a person can't perform social distancing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When coughing or sneezing. • Using public transportation. • Shopping and working at essential businesses like grocery stores and pharmacies • Daily use as the wearer feels comfortable
<p>Fit Testing Required</p>	<p>Yes. Due to the fit, the wearer may find it hard to breathe.</p>	<p>Yes. Due to the fit, the wearer may find it hard to breathe.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Scarves and bandanas can be used if necessary.</p>
<p>Use Limitations</p>	<p>Extended use is preferable to reuse. Extended use is the practice of wearing the same facemask for long durations as opposed to removing and reusing.</p> <p>Must be discarded if it becomes soiled, damaged or hard to breathe in</p>	<p>Reusable face mask with proper cleaning and disinfecting as per manufacturer's instructions</p> <p>P100 cartridges typically have a life of 40 hour or 30 day service life depending on environments it is being used in</p>	<p>Extended use is preferable to reuse. Extended use is the practice of wearing the same facemask for long durations as opposed to removing and reusing.</p> <p>Must be discarded if it becomes soiled, damaged or hard to breathe in</p>	<p>Homemade/Cloth Masks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be washed after each use. • Should not be worn damp or when wet from spit or mucus.

Facemasks and respirators offer a physical barrier to contact with respiratory droplets and aerosols. When used correctly, masks, along with other preventative measures such as hand washing, and social distancing reduce the risk of SARS-CoV-2 transmission leading to COVID-19 infection.