

Guidelines for Reuse and Replacement of N95 Mask

Intended for health care workers at risk of airborne exposure to infectious illness

Definitions

- **Reuse:** the practice of using the same N95 mask for multiple encounters with patients in airborne precautions but removing (doffing) and putting on (donning) between each encounter. The CDC recommends limited reuse as an option for conserving masks.
- **Extended use:** the practice of wearing the same N95 respirator for repeated close contact encounters with several patients, without removing the respirator between patient encounters. Extended use is well suited to situations where multiple patients are infected with the same respiratory pathogen and patients are placed together in dedicated rooms.

Recommendations for use

- Use a face shield over a N95 mask to reduce surface contamination. Do not wear an additional mask over a N95 mask as it can degrade protection and impair seal.
- You may be issued more than one N95 mask. Wear one respirator each day and store it in a breathable paper bag at the end of each shift. Masks should be stored in paper bags labeled with the last used date. Rotate masks using the one that has been stored the longest. The order of mask use should be repeated with a minimum of five days between each use.
- **DO NOT** wear lipstick, or other makeup to reduce excess soiling of N95 mask.
- Minimize unnecessary contact with the mask surface. Follow strict adherence to hand hygiene practices, proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) donning and doffing technique, and regularly inspect the mask for damage.
- Perform hand hygiene with soap and water (20 seconds) or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after touching or adjusting the mask.
- Use a pair of clean (non-sterile) gloves when donning a previously worn N95 mask. Perform seal check to ensure mask seals properly. Discard gloves after donning the N95 mask and after making any adjustments.

Storage of your N95

- Properly store the N95 mask in a paper bag between uses to prevent damaging, soiling, or deforming the mask. Clearly label the paper bag with your name to reduce accidental use by another person.
- After each shift, ensure your name is legible and indicate the number of shifts and date last used on the outside of the bag.

N95 mask replacement

- N95 masks are to be replaced if:
 - contaminated with blood, mucus, or nasal secretions, or other bodily fluids
 - broken, damaged, or becomes hard to breathe through
- To receive a replacement mask, please contact your employee health or staff development department during normal business hours.
- Your old N95 mask will be replaced with the same style/model, if available, and you will be given a new paper bag.

MMC only

As a reminder, N95 respirator mask fit testing occurs Monday to Friday from 7am – 3 pm in HIM Medical Records Conference Room on the ground floor near Human Resources (N95 signs posted throughout).

- To schedule an N95 fit-testing appointment, call 231-392-7995 between 7 am to 5 pm.
- To obtain an N95 respirator mask replacement, call 231-392-7995. Mask replacement is available 24/7.

References:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/decontamination-reuse-respirators.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/hcwcontrols/recommendedguidanceextuse.html>