

N95 Respirator FAQs

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This document refers to N95 masks as respirators. Any clinical situation calling for an N95 can also be accomplished using a CAPR or PAPR.

When do I need to wear an N95 mask?

N95 masks need to be used for patients in the following scenarios:

- ALL care for patients who are COVID-19 positive
- ALL care for patients who screen positive who do not yet have a COVID-19 test result
- ALL care for patients who are unable to be asked the screening questions (for example, trauma patients, those who are unable to answer)
- ONLY during aerosol-generating procedures for patients who are asymptomatic and are of unknown COVID-19 status. If patients had a pre-procedural COVID-19 test that was negative, no N95 is needed.

When should I wear my N95 mask without a face shield?

In any situation where you are wearing an N95 mask, you should be wearing a face shield over the mask for eye protection.

When should I replace my N95 mask?

Replace your N95 mask when:

- You have worn it for 5 shifts
- It becomes soiled, torn, difficult to breathe through or no longer fits you well (fails a fit check)

When your mask needs to be replaced, please exchange your used mask for a new one through your unit's process.

How many N95 masks should I have?

This will vary depending on your role. Please discuss with your manager. We would like employees to be able to let a mask dry out for 5 days between uses.

How should I store my N95 masks?

When not in use, place your N95 mask in a paper bag. Date the bag with the date that you last used the mask and note how many shifts you have used that mask for. If you have enough masks, wait 5 days after using a mask before wearing it again. If you do not have enough masks, ask your manager.

Should I wear my N95 for prolonged periods of time?

You can wear the same N95 mask for an entire shift unless it becomes soiled, torn, difficult to breathe through or no longer fits well. It is recommended that you have breaks from wearing your N95 mask through the day. For every 2 hours that you are wearing your N95 mask you should have 15 minutes with it off to allow it to dry and your face and skin to recover.

Do I need to fit check my mask every time I put it on?

Yes. The fit check process was explained during fit testing. Check with your fit tester if you have any questions.

Can I use a different kind of mask than the one I was fit tested on?

An N95 mask only provides protection for you if it is appropriately fit tested. If you need a different kind of mask, you need to be fit tested for that new mask type. Do not wear an N95 mask that you have not been fit tested to wear.