Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) Update

During the recent COVID-19 surge the PPE healthcare personnel guidance in the inpatient and outpatient settings were updated. Given the decrease in the COVID-19 rates, effective Thursday March 10, 2022, we will change from requiring to recommending eye protection for direct patient care.

Updated guidance

- Healthcare personnel (HCP) are recommended to wear eye protection for direct patient care

Continued guidance

- HCP are recommended to wear an N95 for all direct patient care
- HCP are required to wear an N95 that they have been fit-tested to wear (or PAPR) for Novel Respiratory (in addition to eye protection, gloves, and gown) and Airborne Isolation
- Under all other circumstances, employees can use an N95 if preferred
- PPE re-use and extended continue as noted in the table below

Why did we make the PPE changes?

Because of a tighter fit around the face, N95s may theoretically offer better source control, reducing the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Source control refers to the use of a mouth/nose covering to contain respiratory secretions. Also, the N95 will enhance your protection if you are in close contact with a patient, caretaker, or employee who has COVID-19 that is not yet diagnosed.

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### Updated recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PPE Extended and Re-use</th>
<th>Updated recommendations</th>
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<tr>
<td>Universal masking</td>
<td>- A medical mask is required at all times.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- An N95 can be used, if preferred. A PAPR is NOT an acceptable alternative.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Direct patient care</td>
<td>- Eye protection is recommended.</td>
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<td>- N95 is recommended.</td>
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<td>- Fit-testing optimizes the performance of the N95 and is required (or a PAPR) for patients on Novel Respiratory Isolation or Airborne Isolation and other scenarios.</td>
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<td>Otherwise, a non-fit-tested N95 can be used.</td>
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<td>You can wear the same N95 across patients, shifts, and days except:</td>
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<td>- for patients on Novel Respiratory Isolation, discard the N95 on room exit every time¹</td>
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<td>- if it is wet/soiled/damaged</td>
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¹ Review this [guidance](#) for more details.

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Medical mask = mask distributed at screening entrance/available within the unit, PAPR = powered air purifying respirator

Can I wear the N95 between patients?

You can wear the same N95 except a) for patients on Novel Respiratory Isolation where you need to change the respirator on room exit, b) if it is wet/soiled/damaged. Review this updated [guidance](#) for more details.

Where will the N95s be distributed?

They will be distributed on the units, clinics, and other care areas. They will not be distributed at the entrances.

What if I have not been fit-tested or have failed fit testing to use an N95?

A fit-tested N95 or PAPR is required when caring for patients on Airborne Isolation or Novel Respiratory Isolation (in addition to eye protection, gloves, and gown) and for other purposes noted in this guidance; fit testing optimizes the protection of the N95. To schedule fit-testing please review this [guidance](#). All HCP who wear N95s must complete this brief [online training](#).

When N95s are used for source control (i.e., instead of a medical mask) or for the care of patients on Droplet, Contact, or Enteric Contact or no Isolation, the wearer does not require fit testing or it may be used by individuals who have failed fit testing.

Do I need to use an N95 in break or charting rooms or offices?

A medical mask is required. You may choose to wear an N95.

Should patients and caregivers be given N95s?

Patients and visitors should be asked to wear a medical mask if they are age eligible and there are no medical contraindications; inpatients and their caretakers should be reminded of this consistently when HCP enter their room. Patients and caregivers can request an N95 in ambulatory/inpatient locations. For inpatients on Novel Respiratory Isolation, refer to the Visitor Guidance for further visitor/caretaker guidance.

Where can I find additional guidance?

You can find additional guidance in this [document](#) and on the [UCSF Clinical COVID-19 Website](#).

V.4

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