

# Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Usage Best Practices



The outbreak of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) is a rapidly evolving situation. Your help is needed to conserve critical PPE supplies. A compilation of suggestions for use have been provided below to use at your own discretion; please follow your hospital protocols for supply conservation. Premier and S2S Global take no responsibility for the implementation of the suggestions below.

## Patient contact:

- Limit the number of people seeing patients in isolation to only those directly involved in their care.
- Limit patient rounding teams to essential staff when isolation precautions are required.
- Limit the number of people entering hospital rooms.
- Use telephone services for interpretation.

## Patient care areas:

- Evaluate the need for isolation precautions each day so patients who no longer require this level of care can be removed and fewer personal protective equipment will be needed.
- Limit the amount of supplies stored in isolation patient care areas.
- Monitor participation in clinical areas to those that are critical to patient care.
- Limit reentry or unnecessary exiting for staff to prevent unnecessary use and disposal of masks.
- If messages need to be conveyed in a patient care area, they should be delivered via phone.
- Do not open packaged PPE until it is needed.

## Patient engagement areas:

- Limit patient PPE supplies to desk areas and have caregivers distribute to patients and family members as needed, for distribution at a rate of one per request.
- Upon distribution, the guest should be advised that they will only receive one mask so they should not dispose of it prematurely or unnecessarily.

## Extended use and/or limited reuse of N95 respirators

- Follow CDC/NIOSH recommendations per the following article: [Recommended Guidance for Extended Use and Limited Reuse of N95 Filtering Facepiece Respirators in Healthcare Settings](#).

## General PPE Guidelines

- Don PPE before any contact with the patient, generally before entering the room.
- The gown should be donned first.
- The mask or respirator should be put on next and properly adjusted to fit; remember to fit check the respirator.
- The goggles or face shield should be donned next, and the gloves donned last.
- Once you have PPE on, use it carefully to prevent spreading contamination.
- When tasks are completed, remove the PPE carefully and discard it in receptacles.
- Immediately perform hand hygiene before going on to the next patient.
  - If hands become visibly contaminated during PPE removal, wash hands before continuing to remove PPE.
  - Wash hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- “Contaminated” and “clean” areas of PPE:
  - **Contaminated:** Outside front of the gown, mask or other donned PPE; areas that have or are likely to have been in contact with body areas or environmental surfaces where the infectious organism may reside.
  - **Clean:** Inside, outside back, ties on head and back of PPEs; areas of PPE that are not likely to have been in contact with the infectious organism.

## PPE Usage Best Practices

### Exam Gloves

- Work from clean to dirty.
- Limit opportunities for “touch contamination” to protect yourself, others and environmental surfaces. Do not touch face or adjust PPE with contaminated gloves. Do not touch surfaces except as necessary during patient care.
- Change gloves as needed, including when they are torn, heavily soiled and after each patient use.
- Discard appropriately, and never wash or reuse gloves.
- **To don gloves:** Don gloves last. Select the correct type and size. Insert hands into gloves. Extend gloves over isolation gown cuffs.
- **To remove gloves:** Grasp outside edge near the wrist. Peel away from hand, turning glove inside-out. Hold in the opposite gloved hand. Slide ungloved finger under the wrist of the remaining glove. Peel off from inside, creating a bag for both gloves.



### Cover/Isolation Gowns

- Fully cover torso from neck to knees, arms to the end of the wrist, and wrap around the back.
- Fasten in back at neck and waist.
- **To don a gown:** Select correct size. The opening of the gown should be in the back. Secure the gown at the neck and waist. If the gown is too small to cover your torso, use two gowns fully. Put on the first gown with the opening in front and the second gown over the first with the opening in the back.
- **To remove a gown:** Unfasten ties. Peel gown away from neck and shoulder. Turn contaminated outside toward the inside. Fold or roll into a bundle. Discard



### Masks/Respirators

- Fully cover the nose and mouth and prevent fluid penetration. Masks should fit snugly over the nose and mouth.
- **To don a mask:** Place over nose, mouth and chin. Fit flexible nose piece over the nose bridge. Secure on the head with ties or elastic. Adjust to fit.
- **To don a respirator:** Select a fit-tested respirator. Place over nose, mouth and chin. Fit flexible nose piece over the nose bridge. Secure on the head with elastic. Adjust to fit. Perform a fit check.
  - On inhalation, the respirator should collapse.
  - On exhalation, check for leakage around face.
- **To remove a mask:** Untie the bottom, then top tie. Remove from face. Discard.
- **To remove a particulate respirator:** Lift the bottom elastic over your head first. Then lift off the top elastic. Discard.



### Goggles/Face Shields

- Personal prescription lenses do not provide optimal eye protection and should not be used instead of goggles.
- Goggles should fit snugly over and around the eyes or personal prescription lenses.
- The face shield should cover the forehead, extend below the chin and wrap around the side of the face.
  - A face shield can be used as a substitute to wearing a mask or goggles when irrigating a wound or suctioning copious secretions.
- **To don eye or face protection:** Position goggles over eyes and secure to the head using the earpieces or headband. Position face shield over face and secure on the brow with headband. Adjust to fit comfortably.
- **To remove goggles or face shield:** Remove goggles or face shield. Grasp ear or headpieces with ungloved hands. Lift away from the face. Place in the designated receptacle for reprocessing or disposal.

