

# Optimal Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

All health care workers and support employees who have direct contact with patients or whose work requires close proximity to patients (less than two metres) must wear a **procedure mask** and **eye protection**. In addition, **gloves** must be worn for direct patient contact.

## GLOVES



- Wear only for direct patient care.
- Perform hand hygiene before and after each use.
- Change gloves between patients. Do not wear gloves between patient encounters due to risk of environmental contamination.

**NOTE:** Hand hygiene remains the best way to prevent the spread of this virus.

## N95 RESPIRATORS



- Wear for airborne isolation patients and aerosol-generating medical procedures (AGMPs) with respiratory symptoms.
- Continue to wear N95 respirators as long as possible, including use for multiple patient interactions.
- Reusing N95 respirators (taking off/putting back on) is NOT recommended.
- Save N95 respirators for reprocessing unless damaged, until further supply is available.

## GOWNS



- Wear gowns for all patients suspected or confirmed with COVID-19. If supplies permit, change between patients.
- For hospitalized patients, when gown supply is low, use a new gown when caring for patients with carbapenemase-producing organisms (CPO), *C. difficile*, or active MRSA infection.
- Remove gowns if performing tasks in non-patient-care areas such as nursing stations, medication rooms, break rooms and meeting rooms.

## EYE PROTECTION (mask with visor, face shield, eye goggles, safety glasses)



- Wear throughout shift.
- Clean when removed for breaks, at end of shift, or soiled.
- Staff wearing eyeglasses may require a face shield if goggles/safety glasses cause eyewear to fog up.
- For face shields, a single staff member may reuse the item (after cleaning) for as long as possible.
- Follow cleaning guidelines.

## SURGICAL MASKS



- Use the same mask for as long as possible.
- Use the same mask for interactions with multiple non-COVID-19 patients, and continue to use in non-patient-care areas.
- Discard masks when damp, soiled, or damaged, and before drinking/eating.
- Do not touch the front of the mask.

**NOTE:** Always perform hand hygiene if mask is adjusted, touched, or removed.

## CLOTHING



- Wear regular clothes and shoes to the facility. Upon arrival, change into work clothes or scrubs (if previously assigned).
- Use dedicated footwear while at work.
- At the end of the shift, change back into regular clothing and shoes before leaving the facility.