

Do's and Don'ts

Do's and Don'ts for Health Care Staff Wearing Facemasks During the COVID-19 Pandemic*

Do's

- ✓ Wear a cloth or medical facemask whenever you are within 6 feet of other people.
- ✓ Wear a medical facemask as personal protective equipment when providing direct care.
- ✓ Change your facemask if it is damaged (e.g., torn, wet or visibly soiled) or becomes hard to breathe through.
- ✓ Remove ear loop facemasks by handling only the ear loops and tie face masks by handling only the ties.
- ✓ Perform hand hygiene before and after removing a facemask.
- ✓ Practice extended use of disposable medical facemasks (e.g., do not remove mask except to discard) rather than reuse (e.g., remove and store mask between uses) if supplies are limited.
- ✓ In crisis situations, if a facemask must be re-used, store and handle in a manner that prevents contamination of the inside of the mask and wash hands after re-applying.

Don'ts

- ✗ Wear a cloth facemask as personal protective equipment (e.g., when providing direct care to a patient).
- ✗ Remove your mask unless you are at least 6 feet away from other people, this includes co-workers, visitors and patients.
- ✗ Touch the front of a used mask during use or removal.
- ✗ Wear a facemask that is soiled, damaged or hard to breathe through.
- ✗ Wear a medical facemask for aerosol generating procedures (use an N95, Elastomeric, or Powered Air Purifying Respirator for these procedures).
- ✗ Reuse medical facemasks unless the organization has reached crisis situation and has contacted the local health authority and no alternative or additional supplies can be anticipated.

* Facemasks are just one element that should be used in conjunction with other measures, such as social distancing, to protect people from exposure to COVID-19. When facemasks are worn as PPE they must be used with other PPE as determined by the clinical situation and facility policies and procedures.