

# How to Fit, Use, and Reuse Masks

**Because of limited supply of masks, N95 or KN95 masks may be worn for extended periods of time or reused in certain situations. The following below pertains to N95/KN95 masks:**

- We are currently using a variety of N95 and KN95 masks for patient care. All staff wearing an N95 or KN95 mask must be fit tested on the particular mask to be used before wearing it for patient care. If you need a mask, need to be fit tested, or have questions regarding fit testing, please contact Employee Health. Employee Health is available at [employeehealth@avowcares.org](mailto:employeehealth@avowcares.org).
- A mask may be reused for up to several visits before it must be discarded. In the home setting, remove and dispose of your N-95/KN95 mask at the end of your visit with any patient known or suspected of having COVID-19.
- If a mask is reused, you need to place it in a clean paper bag such as a brown paper bag which will allow the mask to breathe. These bags are available in the Lyon Center with other supplies. Please make sure your name is on the bag prior to placing the mask inside it.
- You may not reuse a mask if it becomes wet/soiled or no longer provides a tight fit. Also, replace a mask after using it for aerosol-generating procedures such as suctioning.
- As a reminder, hand hygiene must be performed after removing a used mask and immediately after touching or adjusting the mask.

**The following pertain to the use of procedural masks (also known as face masks or surgical masks):**

- When working in a facility, you may choose to wear a cloth face covering for the entire time that you are in that setting as long as you are working with patients who are not known or suspected to be infectious and need isolation.

- If you are wearing a mask and the patient is suspected to be infectious and isolation is needed, discard the mask after the visit with that patient and obtain a new mask. When providing care to a patient that is known to have, or suspected of having, COVID-19, you must wear a N95 or KN95 mask.
- A mask may be worn for multiple visits as long as you have not encountered patients suspected or known to be infectious and needing isolation, and as long as the mask has not become wet/soiled. Face masks should be carefully folded so that the outer surface is held inward and against itself to reduce contact with the outer surface during storage. The folded mask must be stored between uses in a clean paper bag such as a brown paper bag.
- Masks that have become wet/soiled must be discarded and a new one obtained.
- Hand hygiene must be performed after removing a used mask and immediately after touching or adjusting the mask.
- If there are COVID-19 symptoms for the patient, place a procedural mask (also known as a face mask or surgical mask) on the patient (this is called source control and helps minimize spread of infection from the source).
- PPE may be discarded in a regular trash receptacle unless it is visibly contaminated.