



## **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) FAQ During COVID-19**

*This document is applicable to all inpatient settings, including the Emergency Department.  
This information is subject to change based upon updated information.*

### **MASKS**

#### **Does a surgical mask provide enough protection for me?**

Using a surgical mask is intended to protect staff by reducing the risk of potential exposure. We are concerned about transmission from patients to staff but also between anyone who may be contagious but does not know it (this includes staff, patients and visitors).

#### **How does the Governor's Executive Order on mask use impact me?**

The Governor's Executive Order stated that all individuals should use a face mask in public when they are unable to maintain a distance of six feet from other people. MSHS will be providing surgical masks to all staff for compliance with this order. Please speak with your supervisor about obtaining a mask if you have any questions.

#### **When do I wear an N95 respirator?**

N-95 respirator with eye protection (attached or separate face shield/goggles) should be worn when performing aerosol-generating procedures for PUI or COVID-19 patients (e.g., tracheal intubation, non-invasive ventilation, tracheostomy, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, bronchoscopy) or by staff working on units/treatment areas where COVID-19 is considered to be endemic with regularly occurring aerosolizing procedures (e.g., ED, ICU, L&D, OR).

#### **What is MSHS doing to ensure that we have N95 respirators when we need them most?**

We have been very actively and successfully sourcing N95 respirators for our staff during the COVID-19 pandemic. Adhering to our policy is critically important at this time. We are asking staff to store N95 respirators between patients and use the same N95 respirator for COVID positive patients cohorted in the same room, unit, or area.

### **EYE PROTECTION**

#### **What should I wear to protect my eyes when with a COVID positive patient or a PUI?**

Acceptable eye protection includes full face shield, surgical mask with attached face shield, and goggles.

#### **Are goggles equal to a face shield in terms of protecting my eyes?**

Goggles are an equal alternative to a face shield for eye protection as both will protect your eyes from splashes, sprays and droplets.

#### **Can I reuse face shields in between patients with COVID or PUIs?**

Similar to N95 respirators, we are asking staff to clean and store face shields between patients. They should be discarded at the end of the shift.

### **GOWNS**

#### **What gown should I wear for protection when with a COVID positive patient or PUI?**

The gowns available at your sites have been evaluated by our infection prevention, life safety, and other clinical experts and validated as safe and effective.



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### **GENERAL PPE**

#### **What about full body suits or “Tyvek” suits?**

Full body suits or “Tyvek” suits are not part of the recommended PPE. They are not articles of clothing and so should not be worn under gowns. Gowns are easier to put on and, in particular, to take off. They are generally more familiar to healthcare workers and hence more likely to be used and removed correctly. Full body suits require a lot of training to avoid contamination during doffing. Any protective barrier PPE worn to care for a COVID-19 positive patient or PUI is considered contaminated. This PPE must be discarded before leaving the contaminated area—the patients’ room or the unit if the entire unit is a cohorted COVID unit.

#### **Can I bring my own PPE to wear at work?**

No, staff must wear the PPE that is provided to them to ensure an appropriate level of protection. All PPE used on site at Mount Sinai facilities should come from the Mount Sinai Health System supply chain.