

N95 REUSE GUIDE

This guidance is for any responder providing care to a person suspected of, or confirmed to be positive for COVID-19. There is no way of determining the maximum possible number of safe reuses for an N95 respirator to be applied in all cases. Safe N95 reuse is affected by a number of variables that impact respirator function and contamination over time. The recommendations below are designed to provide practical advice so that N95 respirators are discarded before they become a significant risk for contact transmission or their functionality is reduced.

- Extend the use of N95 respirators by wearing the same N95 for repeated close contact encounters with several different patients, without removing the respirator
- Implement limited re-use of N95 respirators for patients with COVID-19, measles, and varicella
- Use respirators as identified by CDC as performing adequately for healthcare delivery beyond the manufacturer-designated shelf life

HOW TO REUSE N95

- Discard N95 respirators following use during aerosol generating procedures.
- Discard N95 respirators contaminated with blood, respiratory or nasal secretions, or other bodily fluids from patients.
- Discard N95 respirators following close contact with any patient co-infected with an infectious disease requiring contact precautions.
- Consider use of a cleanable face shield (preferred³) over an N95 respirator and/or other steps (e.g., masking patients, use of engineering controls), when feasible to reduce surface contamination of the respirator.
- Hang used respirators in a designated storage area or keep them in a clean, breathable container such as a paper bag between uses. To minimize potential cross-contamination, store respirators so that they do not touch each other and the person using the respirator is clearly identified. Storage containers should be disposed of or cleaned regularly.
- Clean hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after touching or adjusting the respirator (if necessary for comfort or to maintain fit).
- Avoid touching the inside of the respirator. If inadvertent contact is made with the inside of the respirator, discard the respirator and perform hand hygiene as described above.
- Use a pair of clean (non-sterile) gloves when donning a used N95 respirator and performing a user seal check. Discard gloves after the N95 respirator is donned and any adjustments are made to ensure the respirator is sitting comfortably on your face with a good seal.
- Follow the employer's maximum number of donnings (or up to five if the manufacturer does not provide a recommendation) and recommended inspection procedures.
- Discard any respirator that is obviously damaged or becomes hard to breathe through.
- Pack or store respirators between uses so that they do not become damaged or deformed.

FLOWCHART TO IDENTIFY & ASSESS THE REUSAGE OF N95 RESPIRATOR

