



Guidelines for the Extended Use of Face Masks

Face masks are part of your Personal Protective Equipment, or PPE. When using masks, these instructions must be followed in order to keep everyone safe and to conserve our supply of masks.

When do I put on my face mask?

- At the beginning of your shift, perform hand hygiene (hand sanitizer or wash with soap), and then put on your mask.
- Hospital-issued masks **cannot** be worn outside of the hospital.
- Home-made or personal masks may be worn outside of the hospital and when coming to/from work.

When should my mask be thrown away and replaced?

- Get a new mask after wearing the same mask for 2 **shifts OR** if your mask becomes soiled, damaged or hard to breathe through **OR** if you wore the mask into the room of a patient on any type of infection isolation precautions. (For example, Droplet, Contact, Enteric.) **EVS staff should get a new mask after cleaning one of these types of rooms.**
- "I think I need a new mask"
 - Talk to your supervisor. They will check the mask and let you know if a new mask is needed.
- "My mask broke."
 - **DO NOT try to repair the mask.** This could degrade the integrity of the mask and cause breakdown to the wearer's skin. Talk to your supervisor. Get a new mask.

How do I keep my mask clean?

- Try not to touch your mask once you have it on.
- If you do touch or adjust your mask you should immediately perform hand hygiene.
- Please take care of your mask so you can wear it for 2 shifts. (Do not wear it to the bathroom or to the cafeteria. Do not wear over makeup.)

When should I remove my mask?

- Wear your mask continuously for your entire shift. You should not wear it when you leave a patient care or work area or to use the bathroom or to take a break to eat or drink.

How should I remove my mask?

- **Do not remove your mask in any patient care area.**
- Clean hands with hand sanitizer or wash with soap before and after removing the mask.
- Remove your mask by releasing the ear loops or by untying the bottom and then the upper tie and pulling away from your face. **Do not remove by grasping the front of the mask.**
- Fold mask in half so that the outside (patient-facing, possibly contaminated side) faces inward. This will keep the dirty side from touching the outer surface during storage.

How should I store my mask for re-use?

- Store your mask in a brown paper bag, clean envelope, or clear plastic bag after your shift. Leave your mask at the hospital for use on your next shift. Leave the top of the bag part open to allow in air.
- Do not store your bags in your locker. Store your bag in a designated container provided by your work unit.

**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS,
PLEASE CONTACT YOUR MANAGER.**

These masks are Personal Protective Equipment. They will help keep us and our patients safe. Please take care of them! If a significant number of masks are lost, left at home, or "soiled" we will not have an enough for everyone to use.