

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Conservation Plan  
for Suspected or Known COVID-19 Patients  
updated 3/17/2020**

**Context:** With the rapidly evolving clinical situation around the COVID-19 pandemic, Innovation Care Partners is working with our providers and healthcare teams to provide the best resources to assist in conserving critical resources while providing the safest patient care possible.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends standard/droplet/contact precautions for all ambulatory, acute care, and ED patients with known or suspected COVID-19 disease, while those who are critically ill and require aerosol generating procedures such as intubation will require airborne precautions as well.

The following recommendations are compiled based on evolving scenarios and current evidence but may not be comprehensive to each situation.

**RECOMMENDED PPE:**

Health care workers caring for patients with suspected COVID-19	Patients with symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facemasks/surgical masks (only N95 if performing procedures that are likely to generate respiratory aerosols)</li> <li>• Face shield or goggles (personal eyeglasses and contact lenses are NOT considered adequate eye protection)</li> <li>• Non-sterile gloves</li> <li>• Isolation gown if available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facemask</li> </ul>

**GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- For patients for whom a physical exam is not required, consider other options such as telephone or telehealth
- Avoid having unnecessary people in the patient rooms (limit visitors to waiting areas as much as possible, no students or extra staff in exam rooms)
- Keep all PPE in a secure location to control access and inventory
- Keep inventory of PPE and consider notifying ICP if low on supplies essential to patient care of COVID-19 suspected patients or if there are excess supplies and willingness to share with our ICP community of providers
- Remove all facemasks from public or high traffic areas; provide facemasks to symptomatic patients and visitors upon check-in to avoid possible contamination of others when coughing or sneezing
- Identify clinical staff that must have access to PPE and restrict other non-essential staff from utilizing PPE
- PPE should not be worn by employees outside of appropriate indications in the clinical setting or for housekeeping purposes
- For patients who have COVID-19 symptoms, combine care where possible to minimize in- and out-of-room activity to preserve supplies

- It is safe for caregivers to use one face mask throughout the day unless it becomes wet, or visibly dirty, or there is a blood or body fluid exposure. If that occurs, it must be disposed of immediately and replaced with a new one
- Follow proper donning and doffing techniques to prevent self-contamination
- If there are shortages of gowns, they should be prioritized for use by staff who are performing aerosol-generating procedures, participating in care activities where splashes and sprays are anticipated, and in high-contact patient care activities that provide opportunities for transfer of pathogens to the hands and clothing of the health care worker (such as dressing, transferring, providing hygiene, changing briefs or assisting with toileting, device care or use)
- Disposable gowns should be discarded after a single use
- Use of N95 masks are preferred during collection of nasopharyngeal swabs from suspected COVID-19 patient, but a facemask is safe and acceptable to use if N95 mask is not available

### **AEROSOLIZING PROCEDURES:**

- Airborne precautions should be followed including the use of N95 respirators with cleanable face shield (preferred) or a surgical mask over an N95 mask when feasible
- Keep unused N95 respirators in a clean, breathable container such as a paper bag between uses
- There are more stringent criteria for disposal or replacement of N95 masks, see CDC for recommendations: <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/hcwcontrols/recommendedguidanceextuse.html>

### Resources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/hcwcontrols/recommendedguidanceextuse.html>

[https://covid-19.uwmedicine.org/Pages/default.aspx?fbclid=IwAR1s9IbXrF7BwTlebQI7KNE\\_NQT54TZ9Zm2jInuRcAhAOd7zUQ226xAFs3Q](https://covid-19.uwmedicine.org/Pages/default.aspx?fbclid=IwAR1s9IbXrF7BwTlebQI7KNE_NQT54TZ9Zm2jInuRcAhAOd7zUQ226xAFs3Q)