

Illinois Department of Public Health – Recommended Guidance for Reuse of N95 Masks

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 suspected of having infectious disease requiring airway procedures (e.g. suction, ambubag intubation, king airway, I-Gel, CPAP and nebulizer)
- Discard any respirator that is obviously damaged, becomes hard to breathe through or if it is inadvertently contaminated.
- Follow the employer's maximum number of donnings (or up to five if the manufacturer does not provide a recommendation) and recommended inspection procedures.

To reduce contamination and extend N95 usefulness:

- Use a surgical mask over an N95 respirator and/or other steps (e.g., masking patients), when feasible to reduce surface contamination of the respirator.
- 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.
- 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.
- Pack or store respirators between uses so that they do not become damaged or deformed.
- Label containers used for storing respirators or label the respirator itself (e.g., on the straps(11)) between uses with the user's name to reduce accidental usage of another person's respirator.