

Mask Use

The main caregiver, or anyone else who cannot avoid contact with the sick person, should wear a surgical mask and gloves if possible. You will likely need to use two or more masks per day, depending on how often you need to change the mask. Masks should have ear loops or ties for a secure fit. Surgical masks can be purchased at your local pharmacy, hardware store, or at the health care section of your local grocery or discount store.

The sick person should also wear a surgical or protective mask if it can be tolerated. If possible, the sick person should wear a mask anytime the caregiver (or any well person) comes into the room.

Surgical Mask and Respirator Donning Procedures

The following screens will show you how to properly put on a surgical mask or disposable respirator.



1. Face Piece Placement

Place the mask over the nose and mouth. If your mask or respirator has a metal nose clip, ensure that this metal clip is placed over the bridge of the nose.



2. Lower Head Strap Placement

Holding the mask against the face, place the lower face piece strap behind the neck. If you have long hair, make sure that the strap is placed under your hair and against the neck for the best fit.



3. Upper Head Strap Placement

Place the upper head strap on the crown of the head, above the ears.

4. Head Strap Adjustments

Adjust the head straps so that the mask fits snugly on the face, applying an even pressure on the nose and jaw line.

Surgical Mask and Respirator Removal (Doffing) Procedures

Properly removing (doffing) the mask or respirator will ensure that you do not become contaminated from the particles that may have become deposited on the mask. After leaving the contaminated area:



1. Gently hold the mask against the face.

2. Remove the upper head strap by sliding it over the head.

3. Remove the lower head strap by sliding it over the head.



4. Lean forward as you remove the mask. Gently exhale while moving the mask away from the face to push contaminants away from the breathing zone as the mask is being removed.



Mask Disposal

Change and throw away masks and gloves. You must change and throw away masks when they become moist. You should throw away gloves after each use. After you've used these items, put them into a plastic bag, tie or knot the bag, and throw the bag away in a wastebasket or garbage can.