

Infection Prevention Guidance on Procedure/Surgical Mask Use and Re-Use

To Doff Facemask with Intent to Reuse:

1. **Perform hand hygiene**
2. Remove mask
 - a. Remove procedure mask by holding the ear loops. The front is contaminated, so remove slowly and carefully.
 - b. Remove surgical mask by untying lower ties FIRST. Untie upper ties last. The front is contaminated, so remove slowly and carefully. Ensure ties do not fall into clean interior side of mask.
3. After removing facemask, visually inspect for contamination, distortion in shape/form. If soiled, torn, or saturated the mask should be discarded.
4. If the facemask is NOT visibly soiled, torn, or saturated, carefully store **on a paper towel exterior side down**.
5. **Perform hand hygiene.**

To Re-don Mask:

1. **Perform hand hygiene**
2. Grasp mask
 - a. Pinch procedure mask at the ear loops or
 - b. Grasp upper ties on surgical mask
3. Place over face
 - c. For procedure mask: Secure ear loops behind the ears. Secure mask.
 - d. For surgical mask: Secure upper ties first, behind head. End by securing lower ties behind head.
4. Perform hand hygiene

Extended Use/Re-Use: A disposable facemask can be worn throughout your shift if not visibly soiled, torn or saturated, and NOT touched while delivering patient care.

All facilities must implement aggressive extended and reuse strategies. CDC guidance can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/face-masks.html>

Cancel all elective and non-urgent procedures and appointments for which a facemask is typically used by HCP.

All facemasks should be placed in a secure and monitored site.

Use facemasks beyond the manufacturer-designated shelf life during patient care activities.

If there is no date available on the facemask label or packaging, facilities should contact the manufacturer. The user should visually inspect the product prior to use and, if there are concerns (such as degraded materials or visible tears), discard the product.

Implement extended use of facemasks.

Extended use of facemasks is the practice of wearing the same facemask for repeated close contact encounters with several different patients, without removing the facemask between patient encounters.

- The facemask should be removed and discarded if soiled, damaged, or hard to breathe through.
- HCP must take care not to touch their facemask. If they touch or adjust their facemask they must immediately perform hand hygiene.
- HCP should leave the patient care area if they need to remove the facemask.

Implement limited re-use of facemasks.

Limited re-use of facemasks is the practice of using the same facemask by one HCP for multiple encounters with different patients but removing it after each encounter. As it is unknown what the potential contribution of contact transmission is for SARS-CoV2, care should be taken to ensure that HCP do not touch outer surfaces of the mask during care, and that mask removal and replacement be done in a careful and deliberate manner.

- The facemask should be removed and discarded if soiled, damaged, or hard to breathe through.
- Not all facemasks can be re-used.
 - Facemasks that fasten to the provider via ties may not be able to be undone without tearing and should be considered only for extended use, rather than re-use.
 - Facemasks with elastic ear hooks may be more suitable for re-use.
- HCP should leave patient care area if they need to remove the facemask. Facemasks should be carefully folded so that the outer surface is held inward and against itself to reduce contact with the outer surface during storage. The folded mask can be stored between uses in a clean sealable paper bag or breathable container.

Visual Instruction on Correct Use and Storage of Facemasks (adapted from Nebraska Medicine)



Figure 1 – This image demonstrates approved wear of face mask. Facemask is shown secured over nose and mouth.



Figure 2 – This image shows the correct way to store mask when not in use. Notice the exterior of the mask is facing DOWN.



Figure 3 - This image shows the correct way to store a surgical mask when not in use. Notice the exterior of the mask is facing DOWN and ties are placed carefully away from the inside of the mask



Figure 4 – This image demonstrates inappropriate wear of the procedure mask. Procedure mask should not be pulled under mouth



Figure 5 – This image demonstrates inappropriate wear of the procedure mask. Procedure mask should not be pulled under chin



Figure 6 - This image demonstrates inappropriate use of procedure mask. Procedure mask should not be kept on the elbow when not in use



Figure 7 - This image demonstrates inappropriate wear of the surgical mask. Surgical mask should not hang from lower ties



Figure 8 – This image demonstrates the wrong way to place mask when not in use. Notice the exterior of the mask if facing up.



Figure 9 – This image demonstrates the wrong way to store surgical mask when not in use. Notice ties are incorrectly touching the interior of the mask. (see figure 3 for correct storage).

Reference: <https://www.nebraskamed.com/sites/default/files/documents/covid-19/universal-ppe-policy-and-faq.pdf>