

N95 Respirator Maintenance Guide

****NOTE****

- **THE USE OF N95 RESPIRATORS IS REQUIRED FOR WORK IN CLOSE CONTACT.**
- **CLOSE CONTACT: A CLOSE CONTACT IS GENERALLY SOMEONE WHO HAS BEEN NEAR A PERSON WITH COVID-19 FOR AT LEAST 15 MINUTES WHEN HEALTH AND SAFETY MEASURES WERE NOT IN PLACE OR WERE INSUFFICIENT (BC CDC, 2021).**
- **ONLY HANDLE YOUR N95 RESPIRATOR WITH CLEAN HANDS AFTER WASHING OR SANITIZING!**

N95 Respirator

The N95 Respirator is a disposable particulate respirator that is designed to help provide reliable respiratory protection of at least 95 percent filtration efficiency against certain non-oil-based particles. This respirator is designed for use for particles such as those from grinding, sanding, sweeping, sawing, bagging, or other dusty operations. This respirator can also help reduce inhalation exposures to certain airborne biological particles (examples: mold, Bacillus anthracis, Mycobacterium tuberculosis), but cannot eliminate the risk of contracting infection, illness, or disease. The respirator incorporates proprietary technology with advanced electrostatically charged microfiber filter media designed for ease of breathing.

Definitions:

Extended use refers to the practice of wearing the same N95 respirator for repeated close contact encounters with several people, without removing the respirator between encounters. Extended use has been recommended as an option for conserving respirators during respiratory pathogen outbreaks and pandemics.

Reuse refers to the practice of using the same N95 respirator for multiple encounters with people but removing it ('doffing') after each encounter. The respirator is stored in between encounters to be put on again ('donned') prior to the next encounter with a person. For pathogens in which contact transmission is not a concern, non-emergency reuse has been practiced for decades.

Extended use is favored over reuse because it is expected to involve less touching of the respirator and therefore less risk of contact transmission. A key consideration for safe extended use is that the respirator must maintain its fit and function. Workers in other industries routinely use N95 respirators for several hours uninterrupted. Experience in these settings indicates that respirators can function within their design specifications for 8 hours of continuous or intermittent use.

Take the following steps to reduce contact transmission after donning:

- Discard N95 respirators following use during aerosol generating procedures.
- Discard N95 respirators contaminated with blood, respiratory or nasal secretions, or other bodily fluids from people.
- Consider use of a cleanable face shield over an N95 respirator to reduce surface contamination or wear safety goggles.

- Perform hand hygiene 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).
- Hang used respirators in a designated storage area or keep them in a clean, breathable container such as a paper bag or wrapped in paper towel between uses. 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.

There is no way of determining the maximum possible number of safe reuses for an N95 respirator as a generic number to be applied in all cases. Safe N95 reuse is affected by a number of variables that impact respirator function and contamination over time.

TRIUMF currently has 3 N95s available on site:

- 3M 8210
- 3M 8511

All the above N95 provide the same level of protection, some styles may fit you better than others.

Three factors that need to be considered regarding N95 replacement:

1. Contamination on the mask – If a person suspects that bodily fluids were generated and may have gotten on your N95. Remove the mask **without** touching the contaminated area by removing the N95 using the straps as in the picture below and dispose.



2. General hygiene for the masks – Only handle your N95 when you have washed or sanitized your hands to prevent contamination. If the mask become discoloured or there is an increase in resistance to breathing, replace your N95.
3. Wear and tear on the mask – If any part of your N95 such as the two headbands, attachment points, nose foam, or noseclip become damaged, replace your mask. Inspect your mask before each shift.

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

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