

PPE Use, Re-Use and Sanitation Recommendations for Community Pharmacies

**Refer to the CDC websites referenced at the end of the document for specific, detailed instructions for re-using and sanitizing PPE.*

Face Masks

When should face masks be used?¹

- According to the CDC, face masks should be worn at all times in the pharmacy.
- Patients should also wear face masks while in the pharmacy.

What types of masks can be used?²

- N95 masks provide the greatest level of protection
- Surgical masks
- Homemade masks made from a cloth barrier (instructional video from Surgeon General [here](#))
 - Note: cloth masks should be used if no other options are available and are not considered PPE. They are recommended for use as a source control measure (used to protect others from yourself).

How to re-use and sanitize face masks^{2,3,4}

- Face masks should be removed and discarded if soiled, damaged or difficult to breathe through
- "Limited re-use" of facemasks - use of the same facemask by one health care provider for multiple encounters with different patients but removing it after each encounter
- When removing surgical masks for reuse, carefully fold the mask so that the outer surface is inward and against itself to reduce contact with the outer surface
- Folded masks should be stored between uses in a clean, sealable paper bag or breathable container
- For recommendations specific to N95 masks and filters click [here](#) and [here](#)
- Cloth face masks can be washed in the laundry between uses

Gloves⁵

When should gloves be used?

- While no specific recommendations currently exist, utilization of gloves can help to protect staff when managing products and working with patients

What types of gloves can be used?

- Disposable gloves

How to re-sanitize and re-use gloves?

- Ensure proper washing of hands before donning gloves and immediately after taking used gloves off
- Extend the use of medical gloves for health care providers without changing the gloves between patients with no known infectious diseases
- Gloved hands should be cleaned between patients and at other times when hand hygiene would normally be performed during routine patient care. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers may degrade vinyl gloves.
- If a glove becomes damaged (e.g., discolored, deteriorated, visible tears, holes), contaminated (e.g., body fluids, chemotherapy drugs) or no longer provides a liquid barrier, replace it

Eye Protection⁶

When should eye protection be used?

- While current recommendations do not exist specifically for pharmacy, eye protection can help to prevent transmission of the virus via eye passages and can be used to prevent touching of eyes

What types of eyewear can be used?

- Protective eyewear (ex: construction glasses or goggles)
- Face shields

How to re-sanitize and re-use eyewear?

- Eyewear should be washed and sanitized between uses

Gowns^{7, 8, 9}

When should gowns be used?

- Gowns should be worn for collection of diagnostic respiratory specimens (I.e. point-of-care testing required a nasal or nasopharyngeal swab)

What types of gowns can be used?

- Isolation gowns
- Cloth gowns (polyester or polyester-cotton fabrics)
- Coveralls

How to re-sanitize and re-use gowns?

- Machine wash cloth gowns

General Recommendations

- Ensure all staff know [how to properly use PPE](#)
- Reserve PPE for personnel; replace PPE normally used for source control with other barrier precautions (ex: tissues)
- Use PPE beyond the manufacture-designated shelf life
- Compounding pharmacies should [refer to this FDA policy](#) on use of PPE

Resources

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/pharmacies.html#face-coverings>
2. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/face-masks.html>
3. <https://www.n95decon.org/>
4. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/decontamination-reuse-respirators.html>
5. <https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/letters-health-care-providers/medical-glove-conservation-strategies-letter-health-care-providers>
6. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/eye-protection.html>
7. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/isolation-gowns.html>
8. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html>
9. <https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/personal-protective-equipment-infection-control/medical-gowns>