**Masking Guidelines**

**Coverage is key**

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**When to Mask**

All healthcare workers should use surgical masks in patient environments.

If a patient is suspected of COVID-19, the patient should be masked in a surgical mask as well.

General population does not need to mask unless they are in public settings, such as a grocery store. N95 masks are not for public use. Surgical masks work well for the public.

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**Are N95 Masks Reusable?**

Dr. Peter Tsai, M.D., the inventor of the filtration fabric in the N95 mask offers two methods.

**N95 Reuse Method #1**

- Leave a used respirator in dry, atmosphere air for 3-4 days to dry it out. Polypropylene in N95 masks is hydrophobic and contains zero moisture. COVID-19 needs a host to survive. When the respirator is dry in 3-4 days, the virus will not have survived.

**N95 Reuse Method #2**

- You can also sterilize the N95 mask by hanging it in the oven **without contacting metal** at 70C (158F) for 30 minutes.
- Use a wooden clip to hang the respirator in the oven.
- Keep N95 masks away from UV light and sunlight. N95 masks are degraded by UV light because it damages the electrostatic charges in the polypropylene material.

**Tips for Both Methods**

- DO NOT place the respirator on a metal surface, or too close to metal. The temperature on the metal surface is higher than the air temperature.
- Keep N95 masks away from UV light and sunlight.
- When removing the mask, hold the edge of the straps. Your hands may be contaminated at this time. Don't touch the inside part of the respirator. Wash your hands with soap for 20 seconds afterward.