

Respirator Use Clarification, COVID-19**January 7, 2022**

- S:** Clarification for the use of respirators
- B:** SARS-CoV-2 is known to be spread by respiratory droplets, including small particle aerosols. The proper use of PPE is known to be effective to decrease the risk for spread of SARS-CoV-2 and PPE includes the use of both the use of eye protection and a face mask or a respirator. The omicron variant presents an additional challenge as it is rapidly spread.
- A:** Face masks have been shown to decrease risk for the spread of COVID, are not tightly fitting and may be comfortably worn for long periods. Respirators are devices which are designed and certified to ensure only highly filtered air is available for inhalation. Filtering facepiece respirators such as N95 disposable and P100 elastomeric devices are tightly fitting, may cause fatigue and shortness of breath and prolonged use may be difficult for some persons. The use of eye protection, in addition to respiratory protection, is necessary to protect staff from COVID.
- R:**
- The PPE policy remains essentially unchanged and is permissive for the use of respirators.
 - The N95 respirator is our primary device for respiratory protection.
 - Use of a respirator is indicated for all staff who have or anticipate face-to-face interaction with patients who may be contagious with COVID.
 - Use of eye protection for patient encounters is required to provide optimal protection.
 - All clinical sites, including ambulatory locations, shall stock N95 respirators and ensure they are available to staff. Site managers shall implement a distribution process to ensure staff access to one respirator when requested.
 - Staff may perform extended use and reuse of N95 respirators.
 - It is recommended that staff use the make/model of N95 to which they were fit tested.
 - There is no “universal” N95- the flat, folded N95 respirator may not suffice for all.
 - **We respect staff’s ability to assess the risk their work environment, and to use respirators responsibly. Respirators and other PPE are to be used judiciously and in alignment with policy.**

Fit Testing Contacts

January 7, 2022

If you need to be fit tested, please reach out to one of the below resources based on your primary employer.

Employer/Location	Contact name	Contact Information & Instructions
NEMG Ambulatory	Rick Coppola Lindsey Bohan	Email: rick.coppola@ynhh.org lindsey.bohan@ynhh.org
YNHHS Hospital campuses	Shannon Church	Email: Respfittest@ynhh.org
Yale Medicine/ Yale University		1. Complete online training , and 2. Select an open session in Yale TMS to schedule fit testing . Questions: Contact Yale EHS at 203-785-3550