

## Extended Use of Surgical/Procedure Mask Guideline

The Medical Officers of Health and Yukon Communicable Disease Control have implemented new processes around masking of healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

When clinically recommended, as per existing PPE Guidance Documents, staff will be required to wear a procedure/surgical mask (any level) throughout their entire shift. This is in addition to existing routine PPE recommendation or COVID processes within the specific clinical setting.

### Staff members who are included in this recommendation are to:

- Wear a procedural/surgical mask continuously for the entire duration of their shift. **A cloth or homemade mask is NOT an acceptable alternative.**
- Be issued masks at the beginning of their shift.
- Remove the mask when taking a break or eating meals.
- Continuation of social distancing practices, regardless of mask use is required (exception in setting of patient care requiring close contact – follow Routine Practice or recommended measures of each patient encounter).
- Replace the mask when:
  - it makes direct contact with a patient;
  - it becomes wet, soiled or otherwise contaminated (e.g. touched inadvertently);
  - becomes moist/humid that its integrity is affected (this includes perspiration).
- Discard the mask at the end of the shift before leaving the facility.

### General guidance for extended use/re-use of surgical/procedural masks:

- Perform hand hygiene
- Taking care not to touch front of mask, remove mask and carefully store the mask on a surface that has been cleaned and dried, taking care to avoid contamination of the inner surface of the mask.
- After removing the mask, inspect it for any contamination or distortion in its shape.
- If the mask is damaged, discard and obtain a new mask.
- Perform hand hygiene
- To put on the mask, be sure to perform hand hygiene immediately before and after putting on (donning) the mask.

Extended use (the practice of wearing the same mask for repeated encounters without removal) is preferred to reuse (taking it off [doffing] and putting back on multiple times) in order to help minimize the risk of contamination. Staff should make all efforts to limit the number of times a mask is doffed and re-donned.

When required as per routine practice, gloves and gowns must be removed immediately after the task for which they were worn and are NOT to be reused. Continue to follow Routine Practices for the use of gowns and gloves.

#### **How to remove (doff) your mask with the intent to reuse the same day:**

1. Perform hand hygiene
2. Remove (doff) the mask
  - a. Remove procedure mask by the ties or ear loops. The front is contaminated, so remove slowly and carefully while leaning forward, or
  - b. Remove surgical mask by untying lower ties first. Untie upper ties last. The front is contaminated, so remove slowly and carefully while leaning forward
3. Visually inspect the mask, looking for any signs of gross contamination, tears or distortion. If saturated (wet), visibly soiled or torn – request a replacement mask from your manager.
4. Store the mask as directed by the manager. This may be in a labeled brown paper bag; on a clean, dry surface; a paper towel; or in a designated area.
5. Perform hand hygiene

#### **How to put on (don) your mask for reuse:**

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 your face and secure the mask behind your ears or around your head (if using ties), avoid touching the front of the mask
4. Perform hand hygiene

See Mask Re-use Guidelines (how to) for step-by-step direction.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/prevent-control-covid-19-long-term-care-homes.html#a6.3.1>

<https://www.nebraskamed.com/sites/default/files/documents/covid-19/surgical-mask-policy-and-faq-nebraska-med.pdf>