

## DIFFERENT TYPES OF MASKS AND HOW TO CARE FOR THEM

April 20, 2020

There are so many changes happening. We're doing and learning new things everyday as we respond to COVID-19. Wearing masks is new for most of us! Knowing how to take care of our masks is also new, and there are different kinds of masks. Here are some useful things to know as we navigate this together.



### CLOTH MASKS

The CDC recommends that members of the public use simple cloth face coverings when in a public setting to slow the spread of the virus, since this will help people who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others. These have been distributed widely to our team and our partners throughout the state. These are the kind the Department of Corrections so graciously produced for us (see more information about how this mask is made here). These are suitable for re-use, though they should be cleaned routinely by putting them in the washing machine (do not put in the dryer).

#### Caring for cloth masks

- ▶ Individuals should be careful not to touch their eyes, nose, and mouth when removing their face covering and wash hands immediately after removing.
- ▶ A washing machine should suffice in properly washing a cloth mask.
- ▶ These masks should not be put in the dryer.

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## PROCEDURAL MASKS

These protect those around you, and provide limited protection for yourself. Facemasks with elastic ear hooks are suitable for re-use. We procured these through vendor and distributed them to our team members and partners throughout the state.

### Caring for procedural masks

- ▶ When you need to remove your facemask, use the elastic bands.
- ▶ When you remove it, fold it so the insides touch, so as not to contaminate your mask, or other surfaces.
- ▶ The folded mask can be stored between uses in a clean sealable paper bag or breathable container.



## N-95 RESPIRATORS

These critical supplies that must be reserved for health care workers and other medical first responders. Within DHS, we have started distributing our limited supply of these to our team members at facilities who serve our most medically fragile lowans. We have been successful in locating what seems to be a very reliable supplier and anticipate being able to fully meet our needs.

### Caring for N-95 respirators

- ▶ According to the CDC, vaporous hydrogen peroxide, ultraviolet germicidal irradiation, and moist heat are the most promising decontamination methods.
- ▶ If N-95 mask decontamination is considered, these methods do not appear to break down filtration or compromise the mask; however, many of these methods can only be used for limited times.

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## ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) have put out helpful guidance. Please refer to the following guidance for more details:

- ▶ [N95 Respirators and Surgical Masks \(Face Masks\)](#)
- ▶ [Updated Guidance for Face Mask / Respirator Extended Use and Re-Use During Times of Crisis](#)
- ▶ [Personal Protective Equipment Guidance](#)
- ▶ [Guidance on Cloth Face Coverings](#)

Please check the CDC and IDPH websites regularly as guidance is frequently updated.

## RESOURCES

- ▶ [Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology \(APIC\)](#)  
or Copy this link: <https://apic.org/free-ipc-resources/>
- ▶ [EPA Disinfectants](#)  
or Copy this link: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>
- ▶ [CDC: Strategies to Optimize the Supply of PPE and Equipment](#)  
or Copy this link: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/index.html>
- ▶ [CDC LTC Guidance Documents](#)  
or Copy this link: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/long-term-care.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fhealthcare-facilities%2Fprevent-spread-in-long-term-care-facilities.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/long-term-care.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fhealthcare-facilities%2Fprevent-spread-in-long-term-care-facilities.html)
- ▶ [CDC Interim Infection Prevention and Control \(IPC\)](#)  
or Copy this link: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Finfection-control%2Fcontrol-recommendations.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Finfection-control%2Fcontrol-recommendations.html)
- ▶ [CDC General Long Term Care](#)  
or Copy this link: <https://www.cdc.gov/longtermcare/>
- ▶ [Iowa Department of Public Health](#)  
or Copy this link: <https://idph.iowa.gov/Emerging-Health-Issues/Novel-Coronavirus>
- ▶ [University of Iowa Health Care: The Loop “Personal protective equipment: Our process if COVID-19 is suspected”](#)  
or Copy this link: <https://medcom.uiowa.edu/theloop/news/personal-protective-equipment-our-process-if-covid-19-is-suspected>

