



It is important to understand the difference between disposable face masks and N95 respirators. Know the proper use and limitations of each type of mask by reviewing the information below:

Disposable Non-Medical Grade Isolation Masks

- Isolation masks have ear loops and are made of soft, breathable material that creates a fluid-resistant physical barrier to limit the spread of infectious droplets to others.
- Unlike a respirator, these masks are not designed to seal tightly around the user's breathing zone and will not provide protection against airborne contaminants.
- **Store your mask in a clean paper bag or other breathable material (not a plastic zip lock bag) between uses.**

N95 Respirators

- N95 respirators are designed to achieve a very close facial fit and highly efficient filtration of airborne particles. The edges of the mask form a tight seal around the nose and mouth.
- OSHA requires that the following information is provided to employees who voluntarily use respiratory protection, including disposable N95 respirators. The information is available in two formats:
 1. Electronic online form: <https://forms.wayne.edu/5384a228b9541/> **OR**
 2. PDF Format (download and print): <https://research.wayne.edu/oehs/pdf/respirator-voluntary.pdf> (If you use the pdf, please maintain these records locally)
- **Watch this short video on proper N95 use:** including how to don/doff, seat the mask properly on your face (especially around your nose), and perform your own seal check: <https://youtu.be/XPOzCG4DrqQ>
- Facial hair should not interfere with the seal of the mask as it may limit its effectiveness.
- **Store your mask in a clean paper bag or other breathable material (not a plastic zip lock bag) between uses.**
- CDC guidance on reuse of N95 respirators:
<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/hcwcontrols/recommendedguidanceextuse.html>

Putting on and taking off face masks and N95s:

- Wash hands or use hand sanitizer prior to handling.
- Ensure the face covering fits over the nose and under the chin.
- Situate the face covering properly with nose wire snug against the nose (if applicable).
- Tie straps behind the head and neck or loop around the ears.
- Avoid touching or adjusting face coverings. Immediately wash hands if you do.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth when removing the face covering.
- When removing, loop your finger into the strap and pull the strap away from the ear, or untie the straps.
- Wash hands immediately after removing.

Additional Resources:

CDC explanation of the difference between isolation masks and N95 respirators:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/respirator-use-faq.html>

CDC usage information for DIY cloth face coverings (this also applies to isolation masks):

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

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