UArizona Guidance for Limited Reuse of N95 Respirators

The University of Arizona aims to 1) protect the health and safety of our community and 2) preserve precious supplies of respirators and in response to the COVID-19 global pandemic. Achieving these goals is a collaborative effort by Occupational Health, Research Laboratory & Safety Services, and Risk Management Services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment, Training, Fit Testing</th>
<th>Risk Management Services (RMS)</th>
<th><a href="mailto:risk@arizona.edu">risk@arizona.edu</a></th>
<th>Non-researchers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Lab &amp; Safety Services (RLSS)</td>
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<td>Researchers</td>
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<td>All UA employees</td>
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Please refer to the [University of Arizona Voluntary Respirator Use Policy](https://www.arizona.edu) for information on N95 use for protection from COVID-19. N95s are not necessary or appropriate for all workers and workplaces. All respirator use in the workplace, including N95s, requires medical clearance and fit testing; please refer to the [Respiratory Protection Acquisition Process Guidance](https://www.arizona.edu) for the process and requirements needed. N95 respirators are not typically intended for reuse; this guidance is intended to provide instructions on the procedures needed to safely reuse N95 respirators as a response to PPE shortages resulting from the COVID-19 global pandemic.
General Guidelines for N95 Extended Use and Reuse

- It is recommended that you use a disposal surgical mask, face covering, and/or face shield with your N95 to prevent any surface contamination and allow for safer reuse.
- Avoid removing, adjusting, or touching respirator and other protective gear during exposure to prevent contamination of protective gear from your hands/gloves.
- Perform proper hand hygiene each time you touch your respirator AND before touching your face, eyes, mouth, nose, and common surfaces.

Supplies:
1. Five (5) N95 respirators
2. Five (5) brown paper bags
3. Sharpie or permanent marker
4. Gloves
5. Handwashing supplies or hand sanitizer

Instructions:
1. Obtain a hazard assessment, medical clearance, and successful fit test before using N95s.
2. Gather your supplies: five (5) N95s, paper bags, sharpie/permanent marker.
3. Before the first use of any respirator, add the following labels directly to the front of each N95 with your marker AFTER performing hand hygiene (washing hands or using hand sanitizer):
   a. First initial, last name, and number each #1-#5.
   b. Please see an example of appropriate labeling below:

4. Put on (or “don”) your N95 after performing hand hygiene. Cup the front of the respirator and pull the bottom strap over the top of your head, then the top strap. Always perform a seal check after putting your respirator on.
   a. Clean gloves should be worn when donning respirators that have been previously used.
Putting On The Respirator

Position the respirator in your hands with the nose piece at your fingertips.

Cup the respirator in your hand allowing the headbands to hang below your hand. Hold the respirator under your chin with the nosepiece up.

The top strap (on single or double strap respirators) goes over and rests at the top back of your head. The bottom strap is positioned around the neck and below the ears. Do not crisscross straps.

Place your fingertips from both hands at the top of the metal nose clip (if present). Slide fingertips down both sides of the metal strip to mold the nose area to the shape of your nose.

Credit: CDC

5. Once work requiring the N95 is complete, remove (“doff”) only AFTER removing other PPE such as gowns, face shields, and gloves AND performing hand hygiene.

6. Don a clean pair of gloves and remove your respirator.
   a. Reverse the procedure used to don your respirator: Remove the top strap, then the bottom strap. Cup the front of the respirator with you gloved hands and remove from your face. Do not touch the interior of the respirator.
   b. Respirators can also be cupped using a Tupperware container, removed, and kept in the Tupperware while waiting to be reused.

NOTE: Immediately discard any N95 that has been exposed to aerosols (e.g. sneeze), is visibly damaged, contaminated, or is hard to breathe through.

7. Add a tick mark (“I”) to the front of the N95 to indicate it has been used.
8. Place the respirator exterior-side down into a new, clean, and dry paper bag.
9. Label the outside of the bag with the date, time, and your initials.
11. Place the bag in a clean, dry location where it will be protected from contamination and/or environmental extremes (high temperatures, moisture, etc.).
12. Allow the respirator to rest for five (5) days before reuse.
13. Before the use of a decontaminated N95, perform a thorough check for any damage or deformations on the respirator; if any are found, dispose of the respirator.
14. Once you have five (5) tick marks, dispose of the respirator. Respirators can only be reused a maximum of five (5) times.

For questions or concerns:

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