

DONNING AND DOFFING EXPLAINED: EYE PROTECTION IN A HEALTHCARE SETTING

Many types of workers are now wearing disposable eye protection to help protect against the spread of COVID-19. Eye protection is intended to act as a barrier to infectious materials entering the eye, to reduce the risk of exposure to the novel coronavirus. Eye protection is used in conjunction with other Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as gloves, gowns and face masks or respirators, and like all PPE care must be taken when donning and doffing.

Eye protection PPE¹ includes; Indirectly-vented Goggles



CDC/NIOSH states: "Appropriately fitted, indirectly-vented goggles* with a manufacturer's anti-fog coating provide the most reliable practical eye protection from splashes, sprays, and respiratory droplets. Many styles of goggles fit adequately over prescription glasses with minimal gaps. However, to be efficacious, goggles must fit snugly, particularly from the corners of the eye across the brow. While highly effective as eye protection, goggles do not provide splash or spray protection to other parts of the face.

** Directly-vented goggles may allow penetration by splashes or sprays; therefore, indirectly-vented or non-vented goggles are preferred for infection control."*

Face Shields



CDC/NIOSH states: "Face shields are commonly used as an infection control alternative to goggles.** As opposed to goggles, a face shield can also provide protection to other facial areas. To provide better face and eye protection from splashes and sprays, a face shield should have crown and chin protection and wrap around the face to the point of the ear, which reduces the likelihood that a splash could go around the edge of the shield and reach the eyes. Disposable face shields for medical personnel made of light weight films that are attached to a surgical mask or fit loosely around the face should not be relied upon as optimal protection.

*** In a chemical exposure or industrial setting, face shields should be used in addition to goggles, not as a substitute for goggles (ANSI Z87.1-2003 Practice for occupational and educational eye and face protection)."*

Full Face Respirators



CDC/NIOSH states: "Full facepiece elastomeric respirators and powered air purifying respirators (PAPRs) are designed and used for respiratory protection, but because of their design incidentally provide highly effective eye protection as well. Selection of this type of PPE should be based on an assessment of the respiratory hazard in an infection control situation, but will also provide, as an additional benefit, optimal eye protection."

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Follow our eye protection donning and doffing best practice tips below*²

How to Don



Perform hand washing



With clean washed hands remove eye protection from their packaging



Place goggles over eyes and secure over head with straps/headbands



Tighten and adjust to ensure a snug (not tight) fit



Perform hand washing before donning gloves

How to Remove/Doff

1. Use un-gloved hands
2. Grasp straps or headband and lift goggles/ face shield away from face
3. Place in designated receptacle for disposal

*Individual Healthcare setting sequence for donning and removing PPE should be observed.

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/eye/eye-infectious.html>, 2. <https://www.cdc.gov/hai/pdfs/ppe/PPEslides6-29-04.pdf>