

Appendix D: Guidance on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Use

Personal protective equipment (PPE) provides a physical barrier between individuals and/or contaminated items. The use of PPE is the most visible infection prevention measure but is the last in the hierarchy of controls, and should not be relied on as stand-alone primary prevention measures.

Improper use of PPE (e.g., putting on and removing inappropriately) exposes the user to contamination. It is very important to adhere to proper technique for putting on (donning) and taking off (doffing) PPE (refer to procedures at the end of [Appendix D](#)).

PPE includes the following:

- gloves
- facial protection:
 - masks (medical)
 - eye protection (safety glasses, lenses/frames, or face shields)
- gowns

Not all types of PPE are needed for every situation. Refer to [Appendix B](#) for more information.

Child care facilities, schools, and school divisions must ensure the availability of appropriate PPE for use by children, students, staff, and visitors to prevent exposure to an infectious disease.

The following are the principles for the use and management of PPE, if needed, according to Routine Practices.

Gloves

- Gloves are single-use.
- Gloves are not a substitute for hand hygiene.
- Gloves are needed when in contact with broken or open skin.

Wear gloves as determined by the PCRA

- for anticipated contact with blood, body fluids, secretions and excretions, mucous membranes, draining wounds, or non-intact skin
- for handling items or touching surfaces that are visibly or potentially soiled with blood, body fluids, secretions (e.g., drainage from nose and mouth), or excretions (e.g., urine, feces)
- when staff have an open cut or abrasion on their hand while providing direct medical care to children/students

Appropriate Glove Use

- Perform hand hygiene prior to putting on gloves for tasks requiring clean, aseptic, or sterile technique. Refer to [aseptic technique section](#) on page 15.
- Put on gloves directly before contact with the individual, or just before the task or procedure requiring gloves.
- Wear gloves with good fit and durability that are appropriate to the task. Use of powder-free gloves is preferred.
- Wear disposable gloves or reusable utility gloves for cleaning the environment or equipment and according to manufacturer recommendations. If reusable utility gloves are used, they must be cleaned and disinfected after use and allowed to air-dry completely before re-use.
- Remove disposable gloves and dispose in the garbage following use.
- Do not reuse or clean (with soap and water, disinfectant, or alcohol-based hand sanitizer) single-use disposable gloves.
- Perform hand hygiene following the removal of gloves.
- Do not use the same pair of gloves for the care or contact of more than one individual.

To reduce hand irritation related to gloves, make sure to

- wear gloves for as short a time as possible
- clean and dry hands before putting on gloves
- check to see that gloves are intact, clean, and dry inside

Facial Protection

Wear facial protection (e.g., masks and eye protection, face shields, or lenses and frames) as determined by the PCRA. Educate staff to avoid touching their face while wearing facial protection (e.g., self-inoculation if the eyes are touched with contaminated fingers). Eye protection is rarely needed in a child care facility or school due to the type of risk exposures.

Medical Masks

Wear medical masks as determined by the PCRA

- to protect from sprays or splashes to your mouth and nose
 - Assess if procedures or activities are likely to generate splashes or sprays of blood, body fluids, secretions (e.g., drainage from nose of mouth), or excretions (e.g., urine, feces).
- as a barrier when in contact with a coughing or sneezing individual who is suspected of having a respiratory infection
- as a barrier when performing aseptic/sterile procedures (See [aseptic technique section](#) on page 15.)

Eye Protection

Eyes may be protected through use of

- safety glasses
- face shields
- lenses and frames

Note: Prescription eyeglasses are not protective and not considered to be eye protection.

Wear eye protection as determined by the PCRA

- to protect from sprays or splashes to your eyes
 - Assess if procedures or activities are likely to generate splashes or sprays of blood, body fluids, secretions (e.g., drainage from nose or mouth), or excretions (e.g., urine, feces).
- as a barrier when in contact with a coughing or sneezing individual who is suspected of having a respiratory infection

Appropriate Use of Facial Protection

- Wear facial protection as instructed by the manufacturer.
- Do not position facial protection on the head or around the neck for later use.
- Remove eye protection immediately after use; remove gloves, and then perform hand hygiene.
- If eye protection or face shields are reusable, clean and disinfect them as per organizational policy and procedure before reuse.
- Prescription glasses by themselves are not adequate eye protection. When eye protection is required, wear it over prescription glasses.
- Perform hand hygiene prior to putting on facial protection.
- Avoid self-contamination by not touching facial protection during use and disposal.
- Remove facial protection carefully by the straps or ties.
- Discard facial protection immediately after use and perform hand hygiene.
- Ensure your nose, mouth, and chin are covered when wearing a mask.
- Do not dangle a mask around the neck when not in use.
- Change a mask if it becomes wet or soiled (from the wearer's breathing or due to an external splash).
- Change the mask if breathing becomes difficult.

Long-Sleeved Gowns

Wear long-sleeved, cuffed gowns as determined by the PCRA

- to protect uncovered skin and to prevent soiling of clothing during procedures or activities likely to soil clothing or generate splashes or sprays of blood, body fluids, secretions (e.g., drainage from nose or mouth), or excretions (e.g., urine, feces)

Appropriate Gown Use

- Put on the gown with the opening at the back and with edges overlapping, thereby covering as much clothing as possible.
- Ensure the cuffs of the gown are covered by gloves.
- Remove the gown, as outlined, immediately after use and discard in the garbage. Perform hand hygiene after removal of the gown.
- Remove wet gowns immediately to prevent a wicking action that facilitates the passage of germs through the fabric.
- Do not reuse gowns once removed, even for repeated contact with the same child/student.
- Do not wear the same gown with different children/students.

Follow Shared Health's procedures for donning (putting on) and doffing (removing) of PPE:

- Donning (English):
<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/covid-19-donning-ppe-poster.pdf>
- Donning (French):
<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/covid-19-donning-ppe-poster-fr.pdf>
- Doffing (English):
<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/covid-19-doffing-ppe-poster.pdf>
- Doffing (French):
<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/covid-19-doffing-ppe-poster-fr.pdf>