

Voluntary Use of the KN95

Masks and respirators are not the same. Masks protect others from you and a respirator protects you from others. Effective respirators filter the air and provide a seal to the face to prevent the wearer from breathing in certain contaminants, bacteria and viruses. Masks do not provide the same level of protection. **N-95 respirators are not the same as the KN95.**



The NIOSH Approved N95 Respirator: The preferred device to protect workers from viruses. The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) approved N-95 filtering face piece respirators have not been available to non-approved healthcare institutions since the beginning of the COVID-19 emergency. Use requires fit-testing, medical clearance, and training.



The KN95: KN95s may be worn voluntarily during specified emergencies as a potentially more protective device than a procedural mask or other face coverings. KN-95s must have a good fit and a firm seal around the nose and mouth since the level of filtration cannot be verified. With a good fit, a KN95 may provide more protection than a typical cotton or homemade mask as it can provide some level of air filtration, while most masks cannot. KN95s are best used in combination with other layers of protection such as distancing, everyone wearing masks and other work practices.



Dust, Surgical, Cotton/Homemade Masks: These are required to be worn by executive order and allowable in most non-patient care operations. Masks are typically unable to filter virus-size particles.

No mask or respirator is a silver bullet or is 100% effective-don't be lulled into a false sense of security. No mask or respirator should be used without the employer having a comprehensive plan and hazard assessment, which includes selecting more effective methods of protection using the hierarchy of controls- including avoidance and distancing.

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To Put on a KN95:

1. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water or with hand sanitizer.
2. Pull the sides apart from the outside using the ear loops.
3. Position the KN95 under the chin and over the nose and gently pull the straps over your ears.
4. Mold the metal strip around the bridge of the nose and around the entire seal of the KN95.
5. Make final adjustments to the top and bottom of the ear loops to fit comfortably above and below your ears.
6. Perform a seal check by placing both hands over the KN95 while exhaling and inhaling.
7. If air leaks around your nose, adjust the nosepiece. If air leaks at the edges, adjust the straps back along the sides of your head.

Consider the use of “ear savers” or mask strap holders for a better fit. Twisting the ear loops or wearing an additional face covering over a KN-95 may help to get a better fit.

- **Never use a KN95 if it's soiled or difficult to breathe through.**
- Look for the certified identification marking with KN95 and the Chinese approval process number GB2626-2006. If made after July 1, 2020 the approval process number is GB2626-2020.
- Facial hair may interfere with the seal of the KN95 and reduce its effectiveness.
- KN95s can be reused multiple times in an emergency as long as they are clean, dry, and properly stored.
- Discard KN95s contaminated with blood, respiratory or nasal secretions, other bodily fluids, or otherwise soiled.
- Consider use of a cleanable face shield over a KN95 to keep it from becoming soiled.
- Hang used KN95s in a designated storage area or keep them in a clean, breathable container such as a paper bag between uses.
- Avoid crushing or deforming the KN95.
- Clean hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after touching or adjusting the KN95 (if necessary, for comfort or to maintain fit).
- Avoid touching the inside of the KN95.



KN95s are not appropriate for use while working in proximity (within 6 feet) of any confirmed or suspected COVID-19 positive person.