

# FIT TESTING

## FAQs

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Welcome to the Occupational Health & Safety Department. As part of your employment, you may be required to use and wear an N95 Respirator. Please review the information below. You may direct your questions to the fit tester or the OH&S Department.

### **What is a respirator?**

A respirator is a piece of personal protective equipment (PPE). It is worn on the face and covers at least the nose and mouth.

### **Why do I need a respirator?**

A respirator is used to reduce the wearer's risk of inhaling hazardous airborne particles (including infectious agents), gases, or vapors.

### **What mask should I use?**

You should only use the mask that you have successfully passed a fit test with. It is not "one size fits all".

**Do I have to inspect my mask?** Yes. Any form of PPE must be inspected prior to each use. Make sure the nose piece and elastics are intact. If it looks defective, it probably is. Throw it out and use a new mask.

**Can I use the same mask twice?** No. Never use the same mask twice.

### **What do I need for my fit test?**

Fit testing is generally very simple. It's important that you **DO NOT** chew gum at least 15 minutes prior to your fit test. Workers must be clean-shaven where the seal on the tight fitting respirator comes in contact with the skin or face. This helps to make sure that the respirator can protect you from breathing in contaminants.

### **What does "clean-shaven" mean?**

- You must have shaved before the start of your shift
- You may need to shave again during your shift if your beard grows quickly enough to interfere with your respirator's seal

### **Does it really matter if there's a bit of stubble on my face?**

- Stubble prevents the mask from forming a good seal with your face
- Stubble may seem small, but it is huge when you compare it with dust, fibres, fume particles, gas and vapour molecules
- Stubble under the respirator seal creates plenty of room for contaminants to enter the mask



### **Am I allowed to have any facial hair?**

Short mustaches, sideburns, and small goatees that are neatly trimmed so that no hair compromises the seal of the respirator usually do not present a hazard. The OH&S department asks that all Managers monitor for compliance.

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*To learn more about the Hospital's Respirator Protective Program you can review policy OHS-os-215, available on the Hospital iNtranet.*