

The following guidelines are evidence-based and effective in safely reusing, cleaning, and caring for a N95, KN95, or KF94 surgical mask. • These methods are recommended by the inventor of the N95 mask material, Dr. Peter Tsai, and are supported by research regarding surface stability time of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). These guidelines DO NOT apply to cloth face masks or gators. Cloth masks are NOT recommended for use due to the limited effectiveness in prevention of transmitting the Omicron COVID-19 variant (SAR-CoV-2 VIRUS).

- N95 and KN95 mask filter provides 95 to 98.5% filtering efficiency (FE). This is highly effective in filtering our virus particles and other organisms.
- Using soap and water or medical grade alcohol (60% or more) significantly decreases the FE of the masks (reduces filtering to 54% for soap and water and 67% for alcohol).
- Virus particles live on a mask for 3 days. All SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) viruses on the mask will be dead in 3 days.
- Start by using 4 masks and 4 small brown paper bags (lunch/sandwich sized). Number on the outside of each bag 1–4, one number for each day. They will be used each day in numerical order.
- Starting day 1, at the end of the day, place the used contaminated mask in the brown paper bad numbered 1. Fold the bag closed and place it in a dry area where it will not be disturbed.
- On day 2 use a clean/new mask, at the end of the day, place the used contaminated mask in the brown paper bad numbered 2. Fold the bag closed and place it in a dry area where it will not be disturbed.
- On day 3 use a clean/new mask, at the end of the day, place the used contaminated mask in the brown paper bad numbered 3. Fold the bag closed and place it in a dry area where it will not be disturbed.
- On day 4 use a clean/new mask, at the end of the day, place the used contaminated mask in the brown paper bad numbered. Fold the bag closed and place it in a dry area where it will not be disturbed.
- On day 5, start using the mask in bag numbered 1. This mask is free of virus particles and can be used once again. At the end of the day, place the used contaminated mask in the brown paper bad numbered 1. Fold the bag closed and place it in a dry area where it will not be disturbed.
- Repeat the cycle through bag/mask number 4.
- Each mask can be reused 5 to 7 days depending on amount of time used each day. Throw away masks at anytime the mask fits loosely, elastic is stretched, fibers become frayed (feels like tiny hairs/fibers on your face when worn), or mask becomes wet and/or damaged.
- Masks should be kept at room temperature (21–23C [70–73F]). Do not leave outside in the cold or in a car overnight before reusing, bring the mask indoors and following the above 4-day procedure.

Source: Juang & Tsai, 2020: DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jemermed.2020.04.036>

Article attached