

# Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Safety Guidelines for MCW Clinical Research Personnel during COVID-19

Across the globe, PPE has been in high demand and has not always been immediately available or available at reasonable costs, with some items being in extremely short supply. The best practice is to conserve PPE as much as possible. Re-using “disposable” items, cleaning items that can be disinfected, and limiting the need to use items are all strategies that can help MCW preserve our PPE supplies.

The following guidance has been prepared by the Office of Research based on current Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) recommendations for work during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please note that these guidelines are provided in terms of general environment and level of subject contact, which may vary by study. Please contact the Office of Research at [research@mcw.edu](mailto:research@mcw.edu) with any questions.

## On MCW Campus and in Public/Community Spaces:

- Wear a face mask (surgical/ear-loop) or cloth face covering in all public areas (required).
- Research personnel must adhere to physical distancing guidelines during all study visits. Subjects should be seen in areas that allow at least 6 feet of separation, except when contact is necessary to complete study procedures, for example physical examinations or other study procedures that require contact.
- Use available Physical Distancing signage and Information for Research Subjects ([English](#) & [Spanish](#)).

IMPORTANT: Any research staff coming to campus or conducting MCW research in community-based settings must complete the online [COVID-19 Daily Symptom Checker](#).

## For Research Personnel with Physical Distancing of **GREATER THAN 6 feet** and/or **NO physical contact** with research subjects (Non-COVID-19 or Non-aerosol Producing Procedures):

- Wear a face mask or cloth face covering (required).
- To help conserve PPE, encourage research subjects to wear a mask to their visit. Cloth masks are acceptable protection if the subject (and their caregiver, if applicable) arrives wearing one. All subjects who arrive without a mask must be provided one, along with their caregiver.

Note: Physical distancing is to have a space of 6 feet or more between two people at any given time. This rule does not apply to very brief moments of passing less than 6 feet apart in a corridor or narrow area. Safety measures to maintain 6-foot distancing may include implementing 1-way traffic flows or repositioning clinic rooms/seating areas accordingly.

## For Research Personnel with Physical Distancing of **LESS THAN 6 feet** and/or **direct contact** with research subjects (Non-COVID-19 or Non-aerosol Producing Procedures):

### **FOLLOW STANDARD PRECAUTIONS**

- Wear a surgical/ear-loop mask (required).
- Use gloves for hand protection when in physical contact with subjects (required).
- Use either a face shield or goggles for eye protection (required). Conserve by sanitizing after each use.
- Surgical masks should be conserved and used approximately one every week, only replacing if soiled, misshapen, or torn.
- To help conserve PPE, encourage research subjects to wear a mask to their visit. Cloth masks are acceptable protection if the subject (and/or their caregiver, if applicable) arrives wearing one. All subjects who arrive without a mask must be provided one, along with their caregiver.

Note: Physical distancing is to have a space of 6 feet or more between two people at any given time. This rule does not apply to very brief moments of passing less than 6 feet apart in a corridor or narrow area. Safety measures to maintain 6-foot distancing may include implementing 1-way traffic flows or repositioning clinic rooms/seating areas accordingly.

**For Research Personnel working with known or suspected\* COVID+ Subjects and/or High-Risk Aerosol Producing Procedures:**

- Wear a fitted N95 respirator (required)
- Wear a surgical/ear-loop mask over the N95 respirator to conserve (required)
- Use gloves for hand protection (required).
- Use either a face shield or goggles for eye protection (required). Conserve by sanitizing after each use.
- Body: Wear Isolation gown and apron (to conserve gown for reuse).
- Follow institutional PPE conservation guidelines.

\*Note: Suspected COVID subjects may be symptomatic, or asymptomatic, pending test results.

**ALWAYS:**

- ✓ Clean and disinfect all contact surfaces after subject use, such as chairs, handles, pens, tablets and other touch points
- ✓ Wash hands often or use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol
- ✓ Avoid touching your face, particularly your eyes, nose, and mouth
- ✓ Follow PPE conservation guidelines and launder cloth face coverings regularly
- ✓ **PPE Training/Resources:**  
Note: you must be logged into the MCW network in order to view)
  - [Froedtert PPE Education and Instructional Videos](#)
  - [Children's Wisconsin PPE Quick Guides](#) (located under "Conservation")