

STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH


Renée D. Coleman-Mitchell, MPH  
Commissioner



Ned Lamont  
Governor  
Susan Bysiewicz  
Lt. Governor

HEALTHCARE QUALITY AND SAFETY BRANCH  
BLAST FAX 2020-50

TO: All Nursing Homes, ALSAs and Home Health Agencies

FROM: Commissioner Renée D. Coleman-Mitchell, MPH 

CC: Deputy Commissioner Heather Aaron, MPH, LNHA  
Barbara Cass, RN., Branch Chief, Healthcare Quality and Safety Branch  
Donna Ortelle, Section Chief, Facility Licensing and Investigations Section

DATE: May 4, 2020

SUBJECT: Use of Coveralls and Use of KN95 Respirators

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The attached information refers to:

1. Use of Coveralls during the COVID-19 Pandemic.
2. Use of KN95 Respirators during the COVID-19 Pandemic.



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### Use of Coveralls during the COVID-19 Pandemic – May 1, 2020

There is currently a shortage of isolation gowns in Connecticut. As a strategy for optimizing the supply of isolation gowns, CDC recommends shifting gown use towards cloth isolations.<sup>1</sup> Coveralls are also a consideration for use when isolation gowns are in short supply. Coveralls are often used by hazardous material clean-up crew and other first responders. Coveralls may also be considered for use by EMS providers. DuPont Tyvek® coveralls are currently being used as personal protective equipment (PPE) during the care of patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.

Coveralls may be single-use or multiple-use. Coveralls designed for multiple use should be inspected before donning to assure the material and seams have not been damaged.

- DuPont Tyvek® 400 coveralls are indicated for single-use. They are not intended for reuse and DuPont does not recommend washing and disinfecting them.<sup>2</sup>
- DuPont has some considerations for disinfection and reuse of Tyvek® garments.<sup>3</sup> DPH does not recommend reuse. DuPont does not endorse these methods, cannot guarantee the coveralls will meet standards once disinfection methods are used, and have no information about the efficacy of these methods against SARS-CoV-2.

Extended use of isolation gowns is a strategy for PPE conservation, and the same consideration of extended use may also be applied to coveralls.<sup>1</sup> During extended use, the user minimizes the number of times PPE is doffed by keeping the PPE on between patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19. Bundling breaks from direct patient care allows for extended use, thereby minimizing the risks of doffing PPE and the number of single-use gowns or coveralls that are use.

Healthcare personnel (HCP) who are unfamiliar with the use of coveralls must be trained and practiced in how to don and doff them prior to using as PPE for patient care. Coveralls should be changed if they are soiled, grossly contaminated, or damaged. HCP should be trained on how to doff coveralls to prevent self-contamination. Inappropriate technique during the doffing process can put the user at risk for exposure to a contaminated surface.

<sup>1</sup>CDC. Strategies for Optimizing the Supply of Isolation Gowns: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/isolation-gowns.html>

<sup>2</sup>Dupont. DuPont Safety & PPE response to COVID-19: [https://www.dupont.com/content/dam/dupont/amer/us/en/personal-protection/public/documents/en/Safety\\_COVID-19\\_Response\\_Letter\\_FAQ.pdf](https://www.dupont.com/content/dam/dupont/amer/us/en/personal-protection/public/documents/en/Safety_COVID-19_Response_Letter_FAQ.pdf)

<sup>3</sup>Dupont. Considerations for healthcare, first responders, and occupational health professionals on the disinfection and reuse of Tyvek® garments during the COVID-19 pandemic: [https://www.dupont.com/content/dam/dupont/amer/us/en/personal-protection/public/documents/en/COVID-19\\_Tyvek\\_Disinfection%20and%20Reuse\\_4-16-2020.pdf](https://www.dupont.com/content/dam/dupont/amer/us/en/personal-protection/public/documents/en/COVID-19_Tyvek_Disinfection%20and%20Reuse_4-16-2020.pdf)



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### Use of KN95 Respirators during the COVID-19 Pandemic

KN95s Respirators are not to be used for patient care activities where respiratory droplets can potentially be aerosolized (aerosol-generating procedures)<sup>1</sup> during the care of patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19. KN95 masks are not certified by NIOSH, and CDC does not have knowledge about sustained product quality for non-NIOSH approved devices.

NIOSH approves respirators in using an extensive and well documented process. KN95s do not undergo this process, however NIOSH has been conducting assessments of devices approved in other countries.<sup>2</sup> These assessments show that KN95s do not always provide the expected level of filtration, and there can be substantial variation in filtration efficiency between the devices.

Additionally, KN95s may not be able to form and maintain a tight seal on the face needed to meet filtration standards. As many KN95 devices utilize ear loops, NIOSH has conducted a limited evaluation of ear loop respirators. The respirators tested have not been able to maintain a tight seal to the face, allowing aerosolized particles to reach the mouth and nose from around of the mask.

KN95s should be used as surgical masks. A gown, gloves, and eye protection should be worn in addition while caring for patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19. KN95s are not to be used for aerosol-generating procedures.

FDA has a list of imported, non-NIOSH approved respirators with Emergency Use Authorization (EUA).<sup>3</sup> Non-NIOSH-approved products should only be used in crisis situations when no other NIOSH-approved N95 respirator is available. Non-NIOSH approved devices should not be used during aerosol generating procedures unless the alternative is a loose-fitting surgical mask or improvised device.

<sup>1</sup> CDC. Healthcare Infection Prevention and Control FAQs for COVID-19. "Which procedures are considered aerosol generating procedures in healthcare settings?": <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-faq.html>

<sup>2</sup> CDC. NPPTL Respirator Assessments to Support the COVID-19 Response: <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/respirators/testing/NonNIOSHresults.html>

<sup>3</sup> FDA. Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Emergency Use Authorizations for Medical Devices, Appendix A: Authorized Respirators: <https://www.fda.gov/media/136663/download>



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