



Health and Safety Guidance

Unfitted N95 respirator masks

These are masks that have a nose wire (a metal strip along the top of the mask) to help prevent air leakage at the top of the mask. Nose wires can also help to prevent fogging of eyeglasses or safety glasses. To get a good fit, make sure to bend the nose wire over your nose to conform to your face.



What is an N95 respirator mask?

An N95 respirator mask is a respiratory protective device that is designed to achieve a very close facial fit when fit tested.

In some cases, individuals choose to wear an N95 mask that has not been fit tested.

This means that the fit, or how well the N95 respirator mask seals on the individual’s face, has not been checked by a qualified fit tester. N95 respirators can be worn even if they have not been fit tested; however, they provide the best protection when they fit properly and form a tight seal against the face. An unfitted N95 may still reduce exposure to airborne particles and infectious aerosols, but the level of protection can be substantially lower and will vary depending on how well the respirator fits the individual and how consistently it is worn.

Estimate your N95 Respirator Mask Size by Weight

Medium: 70 – 115 kgs (154 – 253 lbs)

Small: 45 – 70 kgs (99 – 154 lbs)

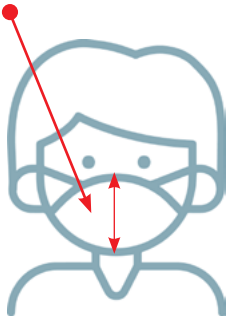
***Note:** N95 respirator masks are not suitable for children under the age of two.

How should I wear an N95 respirator mask?

General fit

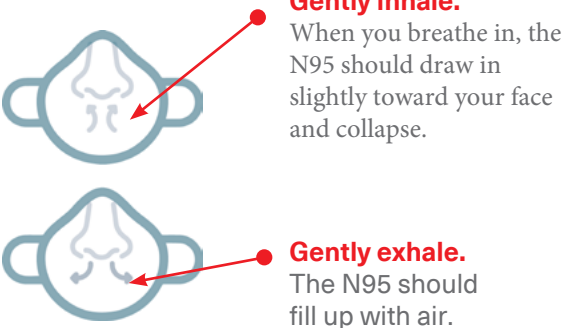
1

Make sure your N95 respirator mask completely covers your nose, mouth, and chin.



2

Check for gaps or air leaks between your face and your respirator mask.



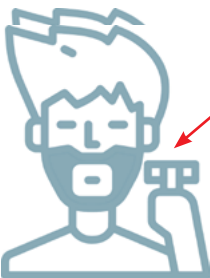
3

Adjust the ties, bands or ear loops, if necessary.



4

Consider keeping facial hair shaved or short if possible, as this allows the respirator mask to fit more closely to your face.



Using your N95 respirator mask

- Ensure your respirator mask is clean, dry and free of damage.
- Discard your respirator mask when:
 - it becomes damaged or deformed,
 - it no longer forms an effective seal to the face,
 - it is wet or visibly dirty, especially with blood, respiratory or nasal secretions, or other bodily fluids, or
 - breathing through it becomes more difficult.
- Clean your hands before and after adjusting or removing your respirator mask.
- Don’t share used respirator masks.

Safety considerations

If you are wearing an N95 respirator mask, you may experience some discomfort due to the tight fit, if worn for an extended period of time. Remove your respirator mask if you have trouble breathing for any reason while wearing it.

People with chronic respiratory, cardiac, or other medical conditions that make breathing difficult should check with their healthcare provider before using an N95 mask because these respirators can make it more difficult to breathe.

Users should self-monitor for the following subjective symptoms, which include but are not limited to nausea, headache, light-headedness, visual difficulties, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, palpitations, confusion, or difficulty communicating with a respirator mask on.

If an N95 mask user is experiencing a respiratory emergency, a first aid response should include removing the individual from the hazard (ensure that the individual is brought inside to a well-ventilated area), remove the N95 respirator mask, and seek help to ensure the health and safety of the individual.

Other ways to protect yourself against wildfire smoke and other respiratory health risks

- Monitor local air quality and follow public health guidance.
- Reduce outdoor activities when air quality is poor.
- Improve indoor air quality and ventilation when possible.
- Stay home when sick, when possible.
- Wash your hands regularly and cover coughs and sneezes.
- Stay up to date with recommended vaccinations.

Learn more at: www.canada.ca/public-health