



Expanded FIT testing model for N95 respirators: Frequently Asked Questions

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In mid-April, NSHA introduced an expanded FIT testing model for N95 respirators to ensure that staff who are working with COVID-suspect or confirmed cases and who may need to perform aerosol-generating procedures are FIT tested to a variety of N95 respirators.

We made this change to ensure that those staff and physicians who need N95s will be able to receive and start using their supply without delay.

Please read the questions and answers below to learn more about this change and what it means for you.

- **Why did NSHA introduce an expanded FIT testing model for N95 respirators?**

Many respirators are manufactured overseas. We're well aware that global markets could shift and change; many countries are limiting exports. As a result, we launched an expanded FIT testing model to ensure staff are FIT tested to all procured models. In addition, we are adding to our stockpile of N95s to ensure we have the supply we need to enable our frontline workers to safely care for patients.

With ongoing consumption, our supply of 1870+ models has been reduced. These models will now **only** be provided to areas that have **not** undergone FIT testing on alternative models.

Knowing that a significant number of health care workers have been FIT tested to this model, we expanded FIT testing to include 3M 1870 and 1860, 1860s and 8210 models, as well as Pleats Plus. **If you have been FIT tested to an alternative N95 model, you must select and don an alternative N95.**

Many high-consumption areas such as COVID units, Critical Care, Respiratory Therapy, Anesthesia, Emergency, Perioperative and Airway teams have completed alternative FIT testing. Occupational Health, Safety and Wellness will be working with leadership in other units/areas to coordinate alternative FIT testing. It is important that staff participate in these FIT testing sessions to ensure they are properly FIT tested to a variety of models as noted above.

We want to assure you that our supply of all PPE, including N95s, can meet our current needs and we are working to ensure our supply meets future demand. Your safety and protection are our priority.

- **When will staff and physicians in my area be FIT tested?**

FIT testing will start in areas most affected by COVID and where aerosol-generating medical procedures (AGMP) are most likely to occur. As we have

dates and areas confirmed, we will reach out to managers with more details.

- **If I was FIT tested before, do I need to be FIT tested again? How will I know?**
If you were FIT tested before for an 1870+ N95 respirator, you will now need to be FIT tested for alternative respirators. The models you will be FIT tested to will depend on your zone and your departmental priority rating. FIT testing to alternative models will ensure you have the option to use all available respirators.

Is there a shortage of N95s respirators?

No. We want to assure you that our supply of all PPE, including N95s, can meet our current needs and we are working to ensure our supply meets future demand. Your safety and protection are our priority.

We must continue to adhere to PPE guidelines to ensure that our supply meets our needs throughout a prolonged response.

- **Why don't we fit all health care workers for N95 respirators?**
Use of N95 respirators is based on infection prevention and control guidelines for communicable disease management. Given COVID-19 is spread by droplets and is not an airborne virus, N95s are still to be used only for aerosol generating medical procedures with patients who have been identified as suspect or confirmed COVID-19 cases. Staff who are working in patient care areas are to wear a procedure mask.