



Measures on Using PPEs When There is None Available:

Measures that we can do or advice individuals if in case Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) gets scarce.

PPEs are disposable gowns, disposable gloves, disposable facemasks, and disposable goggles. Here are some creative ways one can do when resources are lacking.

Disposable Masks:

- May reuse facemasks such as surgical masks or procedure masks when there is not enough supply. This is called extended use.¹
- May cover the N95 mask with a regular surgical mask or a hand-made cloth mask to prolong its durability.
- May use large handkerchief, scarf or bandana to cover nose and mouth when there is no mask available.¹ Put it in a plastic bag after use. Wash it when you get home.
- May use cloth masks when there is no mask available.² Make sure you put in a plastic bag after use. Wash it when you get home.
- After use, put it in a plastic bag to avoid contamination.
- When reusing the facemask, may add a layer of plastic and paper towel on the inside of the mask that will touch your nose and mouth to ensure it is a clean area.

Disposable gloves:

- Reusable gloves may be used and would have to wash it with soap and water before removing.
- Put them in a plastic bag after use to prevent spread of contamination.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/face-masks.html#crisis-capacity>

² <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

- Important to remember that even if you have disposable/reusable gloves, you still have to perform hand hygiene and wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds after you take it off.
- When soap and water is not available, use hand sanitizer with at least 62 % alcohol.
- Avoid touching face, eyes, nose and mouth when you have gloves on.

Disposable gowns:

- The goal is to protect the front of your body that may come in close contact with a sick person, and to have a garment on top of your current clothing that will protect it from getting contaminated and will cover your arms.
- Old jackets or lab gowns or patient gowns may be used.³ The usual openings are in the front, but for PPE, use it with the opening at the back.
- Individuals would have to remove it prior to riding their car or going home and put in a plastic bag to prevent spread of contamination. Then wash it immediately when you get home.
- Other care providers have been creative to use plastic garbage bags where a hole was made for the head and used it similar to a poncho. This has to be discarded after use.

Disposable goggles:

- Reuse disposable goggles and put in plastic bag after each use to avoid spread of contamination.⁴ May wash the disposable goggles with soap and water and reuse them.
- May disinfect the goggles and or face shield with an alcohol based disinfectant after each use.⁴
- If you have no goggles, may use sunglasses as eye protection. Put in plastic bag after each use to avoid spread of contamination. Wash with soap and water after each use.
- Avoid touching your goggles or sun glasses when you are wearing it.

³ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/isolation-gowns.html#crisis-capacity>

⁴ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/eye-protection.html#crisis-capacity>

Here is a link to frequently asked question on PPE.⁵ And remember to follow the proper sequence of putting on and removing of PPE.⁶

⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/respirator-use-faq.html>

⁶ <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/pdfs/PPE-Sequence-508.pdf>