Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Patients with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19

Is your patient intubated or at imminent risk of requiring intubation or other aerosol-generating procedures¹?

No

- Standard + Droplet + Contact (surgical mask, eye shield/goggles, gown, gloves)
- Trained observer for donning and doffing²

Yes

- Airborne/Respirator/Contact + Eye Protection (PAPR/N95, eye shield/goggles, gown, gloves)
- Trained observer for donning and doffing²
- Room: Negative pressure (if available)

¹ Aerosol Generating Procedures:
- Endotracheal intubation and extubation
- Care of the intubated patient (in case of inadvertent disruption of closed ventilator circuit)
- Sputum induction
- Bronchoscopy
- Open airway suctioning
- High flow oxygen therapy
- Noninvasive ventilation (BiPAP, CPAP)
- Nebulizer treatment

Please also note:
- Special Droplet/Contact is appropriate for coughing patients not requiring procedures described above
- Oral suction is not an aerosolizing procedure
- Humidification of oxygen does not alter the approach
- Non-rebreather is not an aerosolizing procedure but may indicate need for escalated therapies
- Move to Airborne/Respirator/Contact + Eye Protection if intubation, noninvasive ventilation, or other aerosol generating procedures are anticipated.
- Move back to Special Droplet/Contact once the aerosolizing procedures have concluded. Please allow appropriate room turnover time depending on location. For HMC and UWMC (including Montlake and Northwest campuses) that time is 1 hour.

² Trained Observation: A trained observer (TO) is a staff member who has been trained in donning and doffing of personal protective equipment (PPE). Donning: You are required to have a TO visually inspect your PPE before you enter the patient’s room or care area (this process is also known as “PPE check”). Doffing: For your safety, a TO is also required for the doffing process to make sure you do not self-contaminate as you remove your PPE. The healthcare worker (HCW) will notify the TO when they are ready to exit the room and follow the instructions of the TO. It is expected that the TO will respond to the HCW’s request to exit the room as quickly as possible, limiting the amount of additional time spent by the HCW in the patient room.

PPE for Specimen Collection: Since nasopharyngeal swabs often generate a strong cough reflex, Standard>Contact>Droplet precautions are required.

More Information: For testing criteria and detailed information about PPE for suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases, please visit our UW Medicine COVID-19 Website