

Type II Face Masks

When to specify a respirator or a face mask
and selecting the right Type II mask

9th December 2021

This advice has been written to assist in the selection of face masks and respirators.



Step 1: Determine the protection required

Assess the hazardous substance in the environment and the level of risk posed to workers, this will include the risk of exposure to viral infection. Issue the most appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) to minimise that risk. If full respiratory protection is not required, then a face mask will be a more suitable alternative.

See the guide to the differences between and the use of face masks and respirators on page 2.

Step 2: Determine whether a Type II or Type IIR face mask is required

Medical face masks are recommended as a means of source control, i.e. they decrease the transmission of a virus by preventing the spread of respiratory droplets produced by coughing or sneezing.

Medical face masks are classified into two types: Type I and Type II according to their Bacterial Filtration Efficiency (BFE). The BFE determines the amount of infective agent retained by the facemask and therefore directly relates to the amount of bacteria released through the mask and into the environment.

Type II masks are further divided according to their Splash Resistance Pressure which determines the mask's resistance level to potentially contaminated fluid splashes.

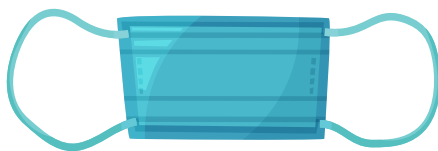
- A Type IIR mask is splash resistant, the letter 'R' signifies splash resistance.
- A Type II mask is not splash resistant.

Splash resistance is required in clinical settings to protect the wearer against splashes of blood or bodily fluids.

See the guide to the differences between Type II and Type IIR Face Masks on page 3.

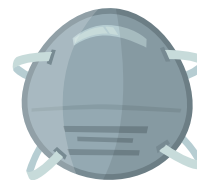
The Difference Between Face Masks and Respirators

Face Mask



A loose-fitting disposable mask that creates a physical barrier between the wearer's nose and mouth and contaminants. Also known as medical or surgical masks they are classified as Type I, Type II or Type IIR

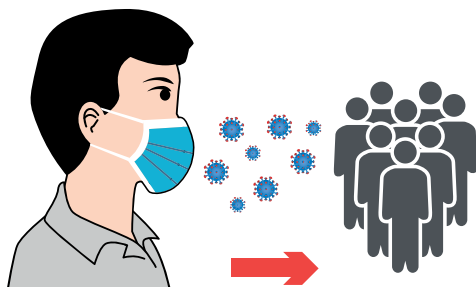
Respirator



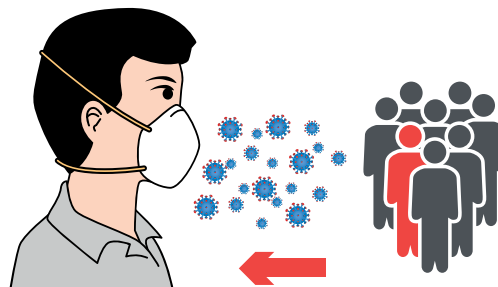
A respiratory protective device designed to achieve a very close facial fit and very efficient filtration of airborne particles. Also known as Filtering Face Piece and classified as FFP1, FFP2, or FFP3.

Use

PREVENTS wearer's respiratory droplets contaminating other persons & surfaces. Fluid splash resistant masks can also protect the wearer against large droplets or sprays of hazardous fluids



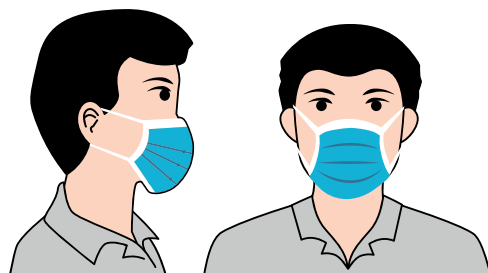
PROTECTS wearers by reducing their risk of inhaling hazardous airborne particles in the environment including small particle aerosols and droplets



Fit

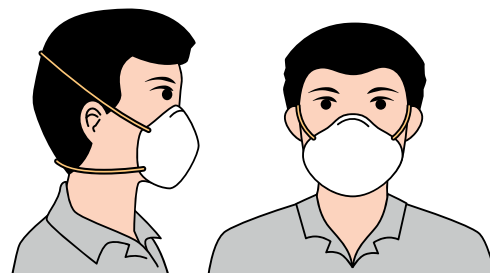
Loose Fitting

Fits loosely over the face. The edges of the mask are not designed to seal fully around the nose and mouth



Tight Fitting

Fits tightly to the face and creates a seal between the face and respirator



Face Fit Testing

No, but donning and doffing protocols should be observed

Yes. Plus, a user seal check is required each time the respirator is put on. Also donning and doffing protocols should be observed

Use in Health Care

- In cohorted areas (but no patient contact)
- Close patient contact (within one metre)¹
- Sessional use in a specific clinical care setting or exposure environment²

- When carrying out aerosol generating procedures (AGP) on a patient with possible or confirmed COVID-19
- In high risk areas where AGPs are being conducted

Use in Industry & Community Settings

From 10 December, face coverings will be required by law in most indoor public places and on public transport, including taxis.

- For a full list of places where face coverings must be worn [click here](#)

In any environment where a risk assessment has identified a hazardous substance and specified the use of a FFP3 or FFP2 respirator

It is not recommended that the general public wear respirators to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including coronavirus (COVID-19).

Differences between and recommended use for Type II and Type IIR Face Masks

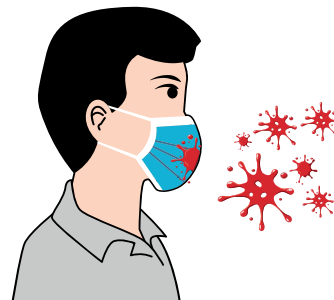
Type II Masks

Suitable for: General activities where there is no risk of exposure to blood and/or body fluid and unlikely exposure to viruses



Type IIR Masks

Those with a genuine need for splash resistance in situations with risk of fluid contamination and viruses



Use in Health Care

- Enhancing infection control
- Preventing the risk of cross-contamination
- Low-risk clinical applications that do not involve blood-borne pathogens or bodily fluids

- In cohorted areas (but no patient contact)
- Close patient contact (within one metre)¹
- Sessional use in a specific clinical care setting or exposure environment ²
- Ambulance crews
- Care home staff

Use in Industry

Face coverings are required in shops, premises that provide close contact services, transport hubs and on public transport. They are not required in offices.

- Businesses can encourage customers, visitors or workers to wear a face covering.
- Consider reasonable adjustments for staff and clients with disabilities and how facecoverings fit with other obligations to workers and customers arising from the law on employment rights, health and safety and equality legislation.

- Prison officers
- Police or security (those in close proximity to Covid 19 cases)

Use in Community Settings

From 10 December, face coverings will be required by law in most indoor public places and on public transport, including taxis.

- For a full list of places where must wear a face coverings must be worn [click here](#)

¹ NHS England - When to wear a face mask or a FFP3 Respirator
www.rdash.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Appendix-47-Surgical-Face-Mask-FFP3.pdf

² Public Health England - COVID-19 personal protective equipment (PPE)
www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe

³ World Health Organisation - Advice on the use of masks in the context of COVID-19
[www.who.int/publications-detail/advice-on-the-use-of-masks-in-the-community-during-home-care-and-in-healthcare-settings-in-the-context-of-the-novel-coronavirus-\(2019-ncov\)-outbreak](http://www.who.int/publications-detail/advice-on-the-use-of-masks-in-the-community-during-home-care-and-in-healthcare-settings-in-the-context-of-the-novel-coronavirus-(2019-ncov)-outbreak)