

Head Covering PPE Recommendations

This document provides guidance for healthcare workers on head covering PPE to safely care for patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection.



Bouffant caps

The CDC does not recommend that healthcare workers wear a bouffant cap for routine care of patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19. However, healthcare workers will still need to wear bouffant caps when performing sterile procedures where a hair covering is required (e.g., central line insertion or dressing change, surgical procedure, cardiac catheterization, or Interventional Radiology procedure).

Why not routinely wear one? Reducing the number of steps involved in PPE removal (doffing) is important to reduce your chances of contaminating yourself with COVID-19. As such, adding extra layers of unnecessary PPE may increase your risk of exposure.

Instead Pull hair back and secure it during patient care.

How to safely wear one when needed (e.g., sterile procedures)

If it is necessary to wear a bouffant, put the N95 respirator on first, followed by the bouffant, as required for the sterile procedure.



Headband with buttons worn with face mask

There is currently no CDC guidance about wearing a headband with buttons while wearing a face mask. However, headbands can provide comfort to the healthcare worker's ears and can be used while caring for any patients during the universal masking protocol at Duke.

When not to wear one? While wearing an N95 respirator, do not wear a headband with buttons. During the doffing procedure, the N95 straps could get caught on the buttons or the headband might get dislodged. This could result in inadvertent contamination of your face.

Remember Perform hand hygiene before and after touching the headband. Use a clean headband each day, and launder after every use.



Surgical caps

There is currently no CDC guidance about wearing male or female surgical caps for routine patient care of any type of patient outside of the operative setting.



Why not wear one? Wearing N95 straps *over* a surgical cap may lead to the mask slipping. Wearing N95 straps *under* a surgical cap creates additional challenges of needing to doff the cap, remove the N95, and then replace the cap. Again, adding extra layers of unnecessary PPE may increase your risk of exposure.

Instead Pull hair back and secure it during patient care. If wearing a surgical cap is necessary, such as in the OR setting, wear a clean one each day and launder one daily.