Masks and Face Coverings

An N95 mask is considered personal protective equipment. When worn properly by persons who have been medically cleared, trained and fitted, an N95 respirator is used to reduce the wearer’s risk of inhaling hazardous airborne particles (including small droplets that may contain viruses). N95 respirators are in short supply and are only to be worn by persons, such as healthcare workers and emergency responders, who are in direct contact with ill patients. If you aren’t involved with providing care to ill patients or servicing their environment, you may not wear an N95 mask on campus.

Surgical Mask

A surgical mask is considered personal protective equipment and can be used to prevent the wearer from being exposed to splash and splatter of body fluids in a healthcare setting and can also lower the emission of large particles generated when the wearer coughs, talks or sneezes. Surgical masks are needed in healthcare settings where they are worn by ill patients to lower the number of virus-laden droplets released when the patient coughs or sneezes. Surgical masks are also in short supply and are not to be worn by the general public because they are needed in healthcare settings.

Face Coverings

Face coverings are not personal protective equipment. The CDC and NJ DOH have recommended their use to decrease the spread of droplets containing the virus that may be generated when the wearer coughs, sneezes or talks.

The CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies), especially in areas of significant community-based transmission.