



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness

# KN95/N95 Respirators Information for Health Care Providers

## Introduction

Respirators are being provided to First Nations communities in line with recent federal interim public health guidance, which has been revised due to the high transmissibility of the Omicron COVID-19 variant.

A respirator can be used in communities as an alternative to masks to reduce the risk of spreading or getting COVID-19 in settings where there may be higher risk of catching the virus, such as when a household member has COVID-19 symptoms or when visiting the Community Health Centre.

Wearing a respirator can be an additional layer of protection against COVID-19 and should be added to existing practices such as promoting and providing COVID-19 vaccines, including booster doses when indicated.

It is important to reinforce the importance of continuing to follow all other COVID-19 prevention recommendations such as: staying home when sick, wearing a non-medical mask when mandated in indoor settings, staying two meters apart, reducing the number of people inside a space and handwashing. All of these steps work together to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in your community.

## Frequently asked questions

**When should community members choose to wear a KN95/N95 respirator versus a non-medical mask?**

A respirator is recommended in the following situations:

- When living with or caring for someone who has symptoms of COVID-19. (When caring for a symptomatic person make sure that you continue to use other equipment such as eye protection, gloves, and a gown)
- Entering a Community Health Centre.

A non-medical mask is appropriate for other settings, such as indoors in poorly ventilated spaces or when physical distancing of two meters cannot be maintained.

**Who should NOT wear a KN95/N95 respirator?**

These respirators are only appropriate for those 12 years of age and older.

Some people may find that the thicker material of the respirator is difficult to tolerate. If that is the case they should continue to use a medical or non-medical mask as appropriate. The best mask is one that can be worn safely and consistently.

All other mask guidance and safety information continues to apply, for more information see:

[Masks 101: Your Questions Answered \(fnha.ca\)](https://fnha.ca/masks-101-your-questions-answered).

**Is fit testing required for community KN95/N95 respirators?**

Fit testing is not required for respirators for community use. However, it is important that users check the seal of their mask every time that they put it on, as indicated in the Instructions for use of KN95/N95 respirators document.

### How will KN95/N95 respirators be allocated to communities?

Respirators have been allocated to First Nations communities according to in-community population numbers for those 12 years of age and older.

### Which respirators are being provided? Can they be used interchangeably?

One of the following models of respirators will be provided to communities. They all meet Canadian standards, and all can be used interchangeably for community purposes. The most important part of any respirator or mask is using it consistently and ensuring that it fits well and tightly over the nose and mouth. Please provide community members with the enclosed instructions on how to ensure that the respirator is sealed around the nose and mouth.



N95 respirators with TC-84A ##### approval number stamp



95 PFE products or CSA certified CA-N95 and CA-N99 type respirators marked with CSA Z94.4.1 standard



KN95 respirators that meet standard GB 2626-2019



KF94 respirators that meet standard KMOEL-2017-64



FFP2 respirators that meet standard EN 149-2001

### Can respirators be reused?

As long as respirators are not visibly dirty, damp or damaged they may be stored and reused by the same individual.

Ensure that masks are stored in a clean, covered container between uses.

### Are these KN95/N95 respirators for use by Health Care workers?

No, Health Care workers should continue to use existing supplies of fit-tested N95 respirators when working with symptomatic patients and providing certain medical procedures.

### Does wearing a respirator replace other layers of protection against COVID-19?

Wearing a respirator can be an additional layer of protection against COVID-19 and should be added to existing practices such as promoting and providing COVID-19 vaccines, including booster shots when indicated.

Also, it is important to keep up with all other COVID-19 prevention recommendations such as: staying home when sick, wearing a non-medical mask when mandated in indoor settings, staying two meters apart, reducing the number of people inside a space and handwashing. All of these steps work together to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in your community.

### Who can I contact with questions?

If you have questions about the quantity or type of respirator the community has received please contact [covid19needs@fnha.ca](mailto: covid19needs@fnha.ca). If you have clinical questions about the use of respirators in community settings please contact [cdmgmt@fnha.ca](mailto: cdmgmt@fnha.ca).