

## Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

# Medical Isolation Gowns in Health Care

This fact sheet provides information on the use of medical isolation gowns in health care settings. Medical isolation gowns are categorized as either surgical gowns or isolation gowns. For more information see [Medical Isolation Gowns for COVID-19 in Health Care Settings](#).

## What is the purpose of medical isolation gowns

- The purpose of a medical isolation gown is to protect the wearer from the splashing and soiling of blood, body fluids and other potentially infectious material. A medical isolation gown is worn as part of personal protective equipment (PPE) for Droplet and Contact Precautions.
- Gowns should have long-sleeves, cover the body front and back from the neck to the thighs, overlap or meet in the back, fasten at the neck and waist and be easy to put on and take off.
- All health care workers require training on how to properly put on and take off isolation gowns.

## How to use medical isolation gowns

- Gowns should only be worn when indicated for providing care to clients/patients/residents.
- When use of a gown is indicated, it should be put on immediately before the task and must be worn properly; tied at the neck and around the waist.
- Immediately after the task, the gown is to be carefully removed in a way that prevents contamination of clothing or skin.
- Discard the used gown immediately after removal into the appropriate receptacle.
- Clean your hands. Do not hang gowns for later use.
- For more details see [Recommended Steps: Putting On and Taking off PPE](#).



## How to conserve medical isolation gowns during a supply crisis

- Reusable or disposable medical isolation gowns used as PPE should be approved by Health Canada and be available in several sizes.
- Conserve existing supplies by decreasing the need for their use:
  - Reduce exposure by placing a physical barrier at entry/screening points
  - Bundle care activities to reduce the need to change a gown
  - Cohort residents to allow for extended use opportunities
- Use expired disposable gowns (ensure they are physically intact, with no wear and tear).
- Identify other apparel or combination of apparel that could provide similar protection (e.g., coveralls, laboratory coats, aprons, sleeve covers).

## What to know about the extended use of PPE

- Practices that extend the use of PPE could potentially place health care workers and their residents/patients at increased risk of transmission of COVID-19 and other pathogens
- The extended use of gowns should only be:
  - implemented when supplies are limited, AND
  - considered and implemented strictly in consultation with your IPAC professional and/or the outbreak management team in order to mitigate the risk of transmission that may occur with extended use.

The information in this document is current as of February 23, 2021

©Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2021

Ontario 