



Regional Emergency Medical Advisory Committee Advisory Regarding COVID-19

Re: Cloth Masks

Distribution: All Mountain Lakes REMAC Physicians and EMS Providers

Date: September 18, 2020

The following advisory is the result of recent discussion among the Mountain Lakes REMAC physicians.

Cloth masks are not adequate protection for EMS providers. If an adequate supply is available (including reuse of masks) N95 use on every provider making patient contact on every call is preferred (please recall there are significant numbers of asymptomatic, contagious, COVID positive patients). If an adequate N95 supply (including mask reuse) is not available, a *surgical* mask is acceptable for all providers interacting with patients who are not exhibiting COVID symptoms (fever, chills, shortness of breath, cough, vomiting) and are not undergoing airway/aerosolizing procedures. Additionally, surgical masks are also required *on every patient* who is not intubated and not on CPAP. Surgical masks should be placed over patient nasal cannulas and non-rebreather masks whenever these devices are used. Use of an N95 mask, eye protection and clothing protection/gloves are required for all providers interacting with patients who are undergoing airway interventions and aerosolizing procedures. If a patient refuses to wear a mask, N95 use is required for the caregiving EMS providers. All drivers should wear a surgical mask at minimum at all times unless the driver's compartment is completely sealed off from the patient compartment. Drivers must wear a surgical mask at minimum if a patient companion is occupying the ambulance passenger seat.

Please see the CDC website regarding N95 mask reuse. In short, mask reuse is acceptable for as long as the mask retains the ability to seal well. Masks should be stored in paper bags (1 mask per bag) between shifts, and on a hook (or similar) between uses on the same shift. The idea during the shift, is to limit self-contamination of the mask.

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/hcwcontrols/recommendedguidanceextuse.html><<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/hcwcontrols/recommendedguidanceextuse.html>

As always, thank you for being the smart, heroic, compassionate providers that you are. Be safe. Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can be helpful.

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