

Masks for workers in care settings

(hospitals, acute care, medical clinics, FMGs, testing facilities, outpatient clinics, COVID-19 clinics, rehabilitation centres, home care, long-term care facilities (CHSLDs, RPAs and other resources of this type))



Zones generally found in care settings	Risk level	User characteristics	Masks required when working with users within a distance of 2 metres ¹	
			Without AGMP ²	With AGMP ³
HOT zone	User with confirmed COVID-19	a) SARS-CoV-2 confirmed by the laboratory	N95 or superior protection	
		b) SRAS-CoV-2 confirmed by epidemiological link		
WARM zone	User with mildly suspected COVID-19	a) User with a clinical picture compatible with COVID-19, without other diagnosis (clinical assessment carried out by a qualified health professional)	N95 or superior protection	
		b) User with a new or aggravated common COVID-19 symptom, without other diagnosis and without a negative result on the laboratory SARS CoV 2 test (questionnaire filled out by all workers) <i>Symptoms: fever, anosmia, sudden ageusia or dysgeusia, recent or aggravated cough, respiratory difficulty or sore throat⁴</i>		
		c) Users with two new or aggravated less specific COVID-19 symptoms, without other diagnosis and without a negative result on the laboratory SARS CoV-2 test (questionnaire filled out by all workers) <i>Symptoms: stomach ache, nausea, diarrhea, intense fatigue, loss of appetite, muscle pain, unusual headache⁴</i>		
WARM zone	User with moderately or highly suspected COVID-19	a) User without symptoms, with <u>high-risk exposure</u> (for example, contact at home) or with moderately suspected COVID-19 (for example, contact at work), without a negative result on the laboratory SARS-CoV-2 test	N95 or superior protection	
		b) User without symptoms who is considered a <u>direct contact</u> by the IPC team, without a negative result on the laboratory SARS-CoV-2 test		
COLD zone	User with mildly suspected COVID-19	a) User without symptoms who is considered an <u>indirect contact</u> by the IPC	ASTM F2100 level 1, 2 or 3 medical mask	
		b) User with a diagnosis other than COVID-19 with one or more symptoms compatible with COVID-19 For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an adult with a fever, nausea, stomach ache or diarrhea diagnosed with appendicitis after a medical examination • adult with a sore throat diagnosed with streptococcal pharyngitis after a rapid test 		
		c) User without new or aggravated symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 AND with no documented exposure to a known case or setting where there has been a COVID-19 outbreak (e.g. CHSLD, RPA) within the past 14 days AND who has not left Canada within the past 14 days		

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NOTES :

1. Medical masks, N95 APR or APR offering superior protection are to be used in addition to the other personal protective equipment required depending on the situation (eye protection, gown and gloves). Workers who must wear an APR must know how to use it, and have received proper training and undergone a fit test before using it in accordance with the Selection, use and care of respirators standard (CSA.Z94.4).
2. If the employer can demonstrate that supply issues prevent it from providing workers who do not carry out AGMP with an N95 APR or an APR offering superior protection, workers may use ASTM F2100 level 2 medical masks as a temporary measure while awaiting the required APR. Also, if the employer can demonstrate that logistical issues prevent it from giving workers fit tests, workers may use an APR that has not been fitted as a temporary measure while awaiting the fit test. In this case, the employer must schedule fit tests for its staff. An inspector may ask to see the schedule.
3. Workers must wear an N95 APR or an APR offering superior protection when entering a room where aerosol-generating medical procedures (AGMP) are carried out. Only absolutely essential AGMP are to be carried out. Indications for care must be reassessed as needed, or a medical analysis must be done to determine whether another care solution is possible. These procedures must be carried out in a private room, and the door must be kept closed. The number of people present during the AGMP and immediately thereafter must be limited. The room's mechanical or natural ventilation must be optimized, if applicable, to dilute the infectious particles produced. Additional measures to temporarily improve ventilation, such as opening a window, activating the bathroom exhaust fan or adding a high efficiency air purifier, must be considered.
4. These lists of symptoms are taken from the document [Outil décisionnel pour l'infirmière au triage à l'urgence](#), published by the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux.
5. See the Gestion des IMGAs chez les usagers jugés non à risque de COVID-19 (dits "patients froids") section in this publication.

This risk scale could change based on the epidemiological situation and the development of published scientific knowledge, in particular concerning the protective effect of vaccination against SARS-CoV-2.