

**PPE Requirements, Symptom Screening, and Testing in Ambulatory Settings
June 5, 2020**

PPE Requirements for Office Visits, Procedures, and Surgeries (see Table 1 below)

All visits:

- All HCP and all symptomatic patients must wear surgical masks
- Asymptomatic patients may wear their own face covering or a surgical mask

Patients with confirmed COVID-19 or with signs/symptoms of COVID-19:

- Patient is given surgical mask to wear
- HCP providing care to patient follow contact and droplet precautions (gown, gloves, eye protection, and surgical mask or N95 respirator)
- Surgical mask or N95 is acceptable for office visits and non-aerosol-generating procedures
- N95 respirators are required for aerosol-generating procedures. [Refer to [COVID-19 Testing Guidelines for Surgical and Other Procedural Patients at NYP](#) for more details on PPE requirements for procedures.]

Patient Screening Protocols for Office Visits, Procedures, and Surgeries

Pre-screening: All patients will be screened for symptoms and signs of COVID-19 at the time of appointment scheduling (current practice) AND on the day prior to the scheduled appointment. Patients who report signs or symptoms of COVID-19 should be referred to a clinician to determine appropriate plan of action (e.g. defer appointment/procedure, schedule telehealth visit, referral to ED, etc.).

Arrival screening: All patients are screened for symptoms and signs of COVID-19 upon arrival. All patients will undergo a temperature check. Patients who report signs or symptoms will be masked (if not already done), asked to perform hand hygiene, and moved to a single room with the door closed. HCP providing care to the patient will use PPE as outlined above.

- **Note:** Due to differences in physical location (e.g. hospitals, dedicated medical buildings, mixed-use commercial buildings), the location of arrival screening (e.g. building entry vs practice/office/procedure area entrance) may vary among sites. Optimal location for arrival screening should be determined by the local operations team in consultation with Infection Prevention & Control.

Testing for COVID-19

Symptomatic patients: Patients with symptoms or signs of COVID-19 should be tested for SARS-CoV-2 as outlined in the [Ambulatory COVID-19 \(SARS-CoV-2\) Testing Guidelines for Patients and Symptomatic Healthcare Personnel](#).

Asymptomatic patients presenting at office visits (non-procedure-based visit): Testing for SARS-CoV-2 by nasopharyngeal swab is not routinely recommended for asymptomatic patients presenting for office visits.

Asymptomatic patients undergoing invasive, potentially aerosol-generating procedures: Testing for the presence of SARS-CoV-2 RNA using a nasopharyngeal swab sample is

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recommended prior to these procedures. Testing should be done within 3 days of the procedure, as close to the time of the procedure as possible.

Table 1: PPE Requirements for Ambulatory Settings Based on Patient Symptoms and Need for Aerosol-Generating Procedures

Patient Symptoms and Need for Aerosol-Generating Procedures			Patient ¹ and Visitor PPE	PPE for HCP in exam room	Staff PPE while obtaining NP swab for SARS-CoV-2 PCR ³
Symptoms on pre-screen?	Symptoms on arrival screen?	Aerosol-generating procedure (AGP)*?			
No	No	No	Surgical mask or their own face covering	Surgical mask (+ eye protection ² if patient is not wearing a mask) ¹	Surgical mask + Eye protection + Gloves
No	No	Yes	Surgical mask or their own face covering	Surgical mask (N95 during and after AGP) + Eye protection + Gown + Gloves	Surgical mask (N95 during and after AGP) + Eye protection + Gloves
Yes ⁵	No	No	Surgical mask	Surgical mask or N95 + Eye protection + Gown + Gloves	Surgical mask or N95 + Eye protection + Gown + Gloves
No	Yes	No			
Yes ⁵	Yes	No			
Yes	Yes	Yes ⁴	Surgical mask	Surgical mask or N95 (N95 during and after AGP) + Eye protection + Gown + Gloves	Surgical mask or N95 (N95 during and after AGP) + Eye protection + Gown + Gloves

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For scheduled AGP, pre-procedure testing with SARS-CoV-2 PCR is recommended for all patients regardless of symptoms of COVID-19. If PCR was performed and result is negative then additional PPE (N95, gown) may not be required. See **Interim Ambulatory COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) Testing Guidelines for Patients and Symptomatic Healthcare Personnel (HCP) May 15, 2020 for more details.*

¹ Patients may not be wearing a mask if not recommended (e.g., <2 years old), unable to keep on a mask reliably (e.g., dementia, autism, behavioral or psychiatric issues, young age), or cannot wear a mask due to respiratory distress.

² Eye protection should also be worn if the patient needs to remove mask during the visit (e.g., oropharyngeal exam).

³ Testing for SARS-CoV-2 by PCR is indicated for symptomatic patients and may be considered for asymptomatic patients who have had close contact with an individual with suspected or confirmed COVID-19. Testing is not routinely recommended for asymptomatic patients.

⁴ Avoid aerosol-generating procedures whenever possible (e.g., use metered-dose inhaler rather than nebulizer whenever feasible)

⁵ Refer to clinician. Consider telehealth visit.