

## **RESPIRATOR TRAINING**

### **Prior to your fit test:**

1. Complete the medical questionnaire and send it to Employee Health.
  - a. Medical clearance is required before you may be fitted for a respirator.
2. Read the training information that follows.
3. Schedule your fit test annually in Employee Health. If your weight changes or you are concerned about your respirator fit, you may contact Employee Health to schedule a fit test at any time. Pregnant employees are exempt from wearing a tight-fitting respirator, and may not enter the TB isolation room.

### **General information about respirator use:**

#### **Why do I need to wear a respirator?**

- Your job duties may require you to be in contact with persons infected with a communicable disease that can damage your body and cause serious illness.
- These diseases, such as TB and SARS, spread when an infectious person coughs, sneezes or speaks, sending their germs into the air. If you inhale air containing the infectious agent, you may become infected.
- Wearing a properly fitted N95 respirator prevents inhaling these infectious particles.

#### **What steps are taken to protect me and others from airborne diseases?**

- Patients suspected of having these diseases are placed in isolation precautions in a negative pressure room such as B354, G259, or another room with a built-in or a portable negative pressure machine.
- Employees will wear a NIOSH approved, N95 particulate respirator when entering these isolation rooms.
- When a patient is transported outside the negative pressure room or must remain in an open area, the patient will be given a surgical mask to wear. Employees do not need respirators during transport.

#### **When am I NOT protected by this respirator?**

The primary function for this respirator is for protection against TB/SARS exposure. It is **not** meant for the following exposures:

- Oxygen deficient atmospheres
- Chemical spills
- Hazardous concentrations of gases or vapors
- For sandblasting, painting, asbestos removal

### **Using the N95 particulate respirator:**

#### **How does the N95 respirator work?**

- The fabric of the N95 respirator has an electrostatic charge that traps infectious particles before the air is inhaled.

#### **Who can wear an N95 respirator?**

- A healthcare worker who has been medically cleared and has passed a fit test within the past year may wear a respirator.

### **Who may NOT wear an N95 respirator?**

- Any healthcare worker who is medically restricted or who is unable to maintain an adequate seal (pass a fit test) may not wear this respirator.
- Patients and visitors are **not** permitted to wear the respirators.

### **How do I put on my N95 respirator?**

- Inspect the respirator before each use to ensure it is not damaged.
- Position the respirator on your face, placing the top strap high on the back of your head, and the lower strap around the neck below the ears. All respirator edges must have direct contact with your face.
- Firmly mold the nosepiece to the shape of your nose, using two hands.

### **How do I know if I have a good seal?**

- Check the seal each time the respirator is put on.
- Cover the respirator with both hands, and exhale (for 1870 mask, inhale and exhale sharply). If air leaks around the edges, adjust the respirator until a seal is achieved. **DO NOT enter the contaminated area until a proper seal is achieved.**

### **How do I remove my respirator?**

- Without touching the respirator, slowly lift the bottom strap from around your neck up and over your head. Then lift off the top strap.

### **Where should I store my respirator when not in use?**

- Respirators are stored in department specific areas.
- Store your respirator in a place that is easily accessible in an emergency situation.
- Store the respirator inside a paper bag, if possible, until service life expires.
- Label your respirator if it is stored.

### **When and where should I dispose of my respirator?**

- Do not wear your respirator for more than 8 hours.
- Discard your respirator if it is wet or damaged.
- Dispose of your respirator in regular trash. It need not be considered biohazardous waste **unless** it is dripping with contaminant, such as blood.