

OFFICE OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

JULY NEWSLETTER

RESPIRATOR DONNING, DOFFING AND SEAL CHECKS



Proper use of respirators is essential in any setting involving airborne hazards from hospitals to construction sites and laboratories. Incorrect donning, doffing, or failed seal checks can expose workers to serious health risks.

If your workplace or job requires the use of a respirator, it is vital to understand and follow the proper procedures for using the respirator issued to you. Proper donning and doffing of the respirator are critical aspects of using this equipment.

WHAT IS RESPIRATOR DONNING, DOFFING, AND SEAL CHECKS?

Respirator donning, doffing, and seal checks are essential procedures for ensuring the effective use of respiratory protection. Donning refers to the process of putting on a respirator correctly, doffing is the process of removing it safely, and seal checks are performed to verify a proper fit and seal against the face, preventing leaks.



DONNING A RESPIRATOR: STEP- BY-STEP GUIDE

Inspect the respirator:

1. Check for damage, tears, or loose parts before putting it on.
2. Position the respirator: Cup the respirator in your hands, with the nosepiece at fingertips.
3. Place over nose and mouth: Pull the headbands over the crown of your head and base of your neck.
4. Mold the nosepiece: Use both hands to mold the nose clip to the shape of your nose



DOFFING THE RESPIRATOR: SAFE REMOVAL

1. Avoid touching the front: Contaminants may be present.
2. Remove by straps only: Tilt your head forward, grasp bottom strap, then top strap, and pull over head.
3. Discard or store properly: Disposable respirators should be discarded; reusable ones must be cleaned and then stored in a clean, sealed container.

Performing a Seal Check (User Seal Check)

- ◆ Positive Pressure Check
 - Exhale gently while blocking the exhalation valve.
 - The respirator should slightly press out without leaking air.
- ◆ Negative Pressure Check
 - Inhale gently while blocking the filter inlets.
 - The respirator should collapse slightly, indicating a good seal.