

USAGE OF Personal Protection DURING HAZE

Personal Protection

Personal protection is required when going outdoors during a haze. The appropriate protection is a device that prevents the inhaling of airborne particles causing the haze. The various protections commonly used are the surgical face mask and the respirator.

Airborne particles causing haze may be as small as 2.5 microns. The use of the surgical mask will not prevent one from inhaling the small airborne particles. Therefore the recommended protection is the use of the respirator.

Use of Respirators

A respirator is a protective device worn covering the nose and mouth and is used to reduce the wearer's risk of inhaling hazardous airborne particles. Respirators work better than surgical masks as they seal better and restrict more polluted air from entering the nose and mouth. They also come with the right filter to remove fine particles found in a haze. The N95 respirator may be used as protection during the haze. The respirator filters the small airborne particles and can reduce exposure to the haze. The N95 mask is effective only if used correctly.

The use of N95 masks increases effort in breathing. For some people, the use of N95 mask may cause discomfort breathing, tiredness or headache. This may be due to the mask causing increased resistance to breathing, and a reduction in the volume of air breathed. For most people this is not serious however in precautions must be taken in certain categories of people.

Precautions to Using the Respirator

- Elderly people, people with lung or heart conditions
- People with claustrophobia
- People with lung diseases such as asthma or emphysema
- Women in the later stages of pregnancy
- Children

N95 mask is not suitable for pregnant women and children. Persons with chronic lung or heart conditions who feel uncomfortable when wearing the N95 masks should stop doing so and consult a doctor before carrying on.

Facial hair, like a beard or mustache, can affect the respirator's ability to protect as it comes between the wearer's face and the respirator's seal. It can also get into the respirator's valves can allow contaminated air to leak into the respirator face piece. Long hair may also get between the respirator seal and wearer's face allowing contaminated air to leak into the respirator.

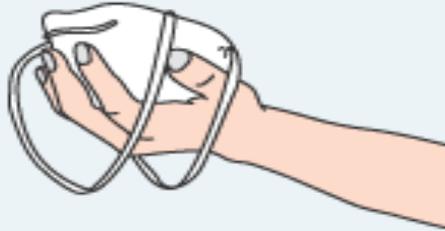
Using the Respirator

1. Respirator must be worn correctly for effective protection
2. Respiratory fit testing must be performed to ensure the correct usage of the respirator.

The steps to the correct method of wearing the N95 respirator are as below.

Method of Using the N95 Respirator

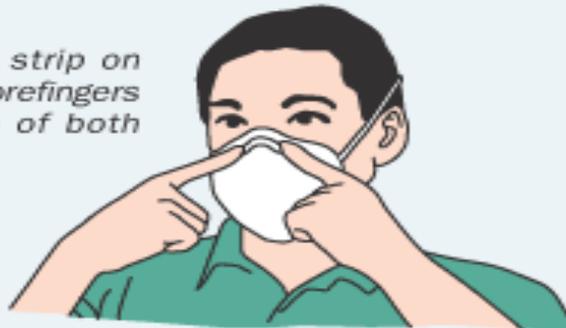
- 1** Choose a small or medium-sized face-piece that fits the face. Pull the head bands loose. The metallic strip should be uppermost. Pass the hand through the head bands.



- 2** Put on the mask. The head bands should be around the head and neck.



- 3** Press the metallic strip on both sides with the forefingers and middle fingers of both hands.



- 4** **Seal Check:**

Positive pressure checking – cover the mask lightly with both hands. Breathe with deliberation. Air should not leak out from the side of the mask.

Negative pressure checking – cover the mask lightly with both hands. Suck in air with deliberation. The mask should depress slightly inward.

