



PPE For Lactation Support Providers In the Community Setting

As you move from telehealth to seeing more clients in person, you have an important decision to make: What personal protective equipment (PPE) will you use during your work with parents and babies? This fact sheet is designed to help you think through that question and arrive at answers that are both scientifically sound and practical to implement.



What is PPE?

PPE includes:

- Masks
- Gloves
- Eye Protection (goggles, face shields)
- Gowns

How Should You Decide?

The PPE you need for a consult depends on three big-picture considerations:

- The setting
- The COVID-19 status of the people involved
- The tasks involved with providing lactation support

Start by considering these basic guidelines.

- Know the COVID-19 status of your client.
- At a minimum, all involved should wear a mask.
- Wear gloves if your hands will contact bodily fluids.
- Practice appropriate hand hygiene before and after the visit, after touching clients, leaving the room or home, or removing your mask or gloves.
- Eye protection and gowns are not needed.
- If you work in a hospital setting, follow the guidance of your institution.



Understand these key facts about masks.

- Medical/surgical masks are recommended for lactation consultants, clients, and everyone else in the room during the consult.
- Masks are not a substitute for other infection prevention measures such as hand hygiene and physical distancing.
- Cloth masks are not recommended for those providing care in a clinical setting, including lactation support providers. Masks are intended to prevent people with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 from infecting others.
- Masks are also recommended for those who care for COVID-19 patients.



Learn the proper steps to put on your mask.

- Use hand hygiene first, then put on a clean mask.
- Mask should be worn tightly around the chin and top of nose.
- Don't touch your mask while it's on your face.
- Discard your mask if it becomes moist.

Learn to remove your mask correctly.

- The front of your mask should be considered contaminated. Do not touch it.
 - If your hands get contaminated while you're taking off your mask, wash them immediately or use hand sanitizer.
 - Depending on the type of mask, grasp elastic around the ears and remove without touching the front, or grasp the bottom ties, then the ones at the top, and remove without touching the front.
 - Discard the mask in a waste container.
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Be aware of proper glove use.

- Remember that gloves do not replace hand hygiene.
- Wear gloves prior to anticipated contact with mucous membranes, non-intact skin, or blood. This includes prior to an infant oral assessment, and prior to touching a client who has open wounds.
- Remove gloves after caring for a client. Never use the same pair of gloves for more than one client.



Guidance on putting on gloves.

- Keep gloves in original packaging. Remove only one glove at first.
- Touching only the top edge of the cuff, put on the first glove.
- Using the bare hand, take out the second glove. Touch only the wrist of the glove.
- Don't touch your forearm with the gloved hand. Turn the external surface of the glove you're putting on the folded fingers of the gloved hand, and pull on the second glove.
- Once gloved, your hands should only touch the client.

When the hand hygiene indication occurs before a contact requiring glove use, perform hand hygiene by rubbing with an alcohol-based handrub or by washing with soap and water.

I. HOW TO DON GLOVES:



1. Take out a glove from its original box



2. Touch only a restricted surface of the glove corresponding to the wrist (at the top edge of the cuff)



3. Don the first glove



4. Take the second glove with the bare hand and touch only a restricted surface of glove corresponding to the wrist

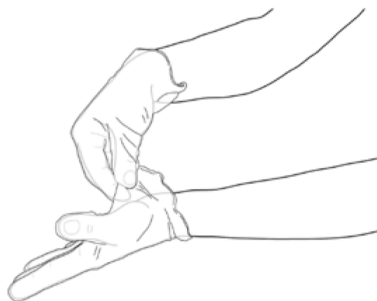


5. To avoid touching the skin of the forearm with the gloved hand, turn the external surface of the glove to be donned on the folded fingers of the gloved hand, thus permitting to glove the second hand

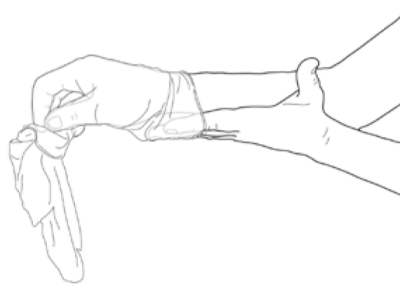


6. Once gloved, hands should not touch anything else that is not defined by indications and conditions for glove use

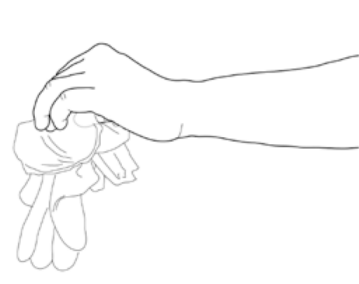
II. HOW TO REMOVE GLOVES:



1. Pinch one glove at the wrist level to remove it, without touching the skin of the forearm, and peel away from the hand, thus allowing the glove to turn inside out



2. Hold the removed glove in the gloved hand and slide the fingers of the ungloved hand inside between the glove and the wrist. Remove the second glove by rolling it down the hand and fold into the first glove



3. Discard the removed gloves

4. Then, perform hand hygiene by rubbing with an alcohol-based handrub or by washing with soap and water

Take off your gloves properly.

- The outside of the gloves is contaminated. If your hands get contaminated while you remove the gloves, immediately wash them or use hand sanitizer.
- Using a gloved hand, grasp the palm of the other glove and peel it off. Hold it in your other gloved hand.
- Slide fingers of ungloved hand under remaining glove at the wrist and peel off second glove over first glove.
- Discard in a waste container.



While gowns are not implicitly recommended, consider wearing an outer garment.

- Neither the CDC nor WHO recommend gowns for those providing lactation support in the community.
- However, experienced clinicians do recommend wearing an outer garment (like a scrub or jacket) while you see a client.
- Once you leave the client's home, consider removing the outer garment.
- Consider wearing a new outer garment for each client.

The final steps: What to do when you get home.

- Specific guidance has not been provided. Consider washing your hands and face or bathing.
- Consider washing the clothing you wore.

These considerations are based on CDC, WHO and other available guidance at the time of publication. All providers should either consult their employer, institution, or local health department to develop a personal PPE plan.



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