01.48 Fit-Testing Healthcare Workers and Students who Use N-95 Respirators (Masks)

Purpose

To provide effective respiratory protection for healthcare workers and students who care for patients with airborne infectious diseases. These diseases include pulmonary tuberculosis, varicella zoster (chickenpox) and airborne infectious diseases that occur as pandemics or that may be released during a bioterrorism attack.

Audience

Healthcare workers (HCW) and students who provide care for patients with airborne infectious diseases.

Policy and Procedures

I. Healthcare workers who may care for patients with airborne infectious diseases will be fit-tested annually.

   A. The first step in fit-testing is filling out a health evaluation form

      1. Health evaluation forms will be sent to HCWs on the list for fit-testing.

      2. The completed form must be returned to the Employee Health Service.

      3. The forms will be reviewed by Employee Health Service staff. If there are no medical contraindications to using an N-95 respirator, the healthcare worker's name and contact information will be sent to Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) and will be given an appointment to be fit-tested.

      4. If the staff reviewing the medical history form has one or more concerns about the fit-testing candidate's health relative to wearing an N-95 respirator, he/she may request that the person come in for an assessment by a physician. The physician will determine whether or not fit testing will be offered to the healthcare worker.

   B. When a healthcare worker receives an appointment for fit-testing, they must present themselves at the place and time to which they have been appointed on time. HCWs who fail to appear for their appointment will be reported to their supervisor.

II. Fit-testing Site

A. Fit-testing will take place in the Materials Management Building located at Mechanic and 13th Street or as designated by EHS.

B. Fit-testing will be performed by EHS staff.

III. Fit-testing Procedure

A. Healthcare workers and students.

B. EHS staff conducting fit-testing will choose a respirator for each person fit-tested based on shape and size of their face. Fit-testing will continue until fit-testing is successful with a particular mask.

C. After the person has been fitted to an N-95 respirator, they will be instructed on how to fit check the N-95 respirator every time they don the respirator.

D. Healthcare workers who cannot be fit-tested to one of the 5 respirators will be provided by EHS with a half- or full-face respirator with HEPA filters or a powered air purifying respirator (PAPR).

E. Each person successfully fitted to an N-95 respirator will be issued a card containing the following information.

1. Name
2. Date fit-tested and date for next fit-test
3. Data on the respirator to which they were fit-tested
   a) Manufacturer
   b) Model Number
   c) Size
4. Result of Fit-test (pass, initials of the staff member who performed fit-test)
5. Test method and instrument used

IV. Healthcare workers and students to be fit-tested for N-95 respirators

A. Patients with respiratory infections will receive healthcare on the Internal Medicine, Family Medicine and Pediatric Services

1. Internal Medicine

   a) Faculty

   b) Fellows

   c) Residents

   d) Students

2. Family Medicine

   a) Faculty

   b) Residents

   c) Students

3. Pediatrics

   a) Faculty

   b) Residents

   c) Students

B. Faculty and staff (to include Respiratory Care, Radiology Technicians, etc.) from other services who may have to provide emergency care to patients with respiratory infections

C. Nursing staff on Internal Medicine, Family Medicine and Pediatric units and in the MICU and PICU.

D. Medical students at the beginning of their third year and Nursing students.

V. Operation of the fit-testing program for healthcare workers

A. The program of quantitive fit-testing of N-95 respirators will initially be limited to members of the Rapid Response Team and 895 healthcare workers in various departments and nursing units (see Table 1).

1. The roster of members of the Rapid Response Team will be maintained in the Employee Health Service.

2. Additions and deletions of names on the Rapid Response Team roster will be provided to the Employee Health Service by the Nursing Administration - Adult Patient Care Services.

3. The Employee Health Service will send the name(s) and contact information for a new member(s) of the team to EHS after they have been cleared for testing.

B. Healthcare workers who are members of the Rapid Response Team and Managers of the healthcare workers from the departments and units shown in Table 1 will be notified that they and their employees will be fit-tested for N-95 respirators.

1. At the time of notification, medical history forms will be sent out to those who will be fit-tested.

2. After the forms are returned to Employee Health by healthcare workers, the forms will be reviewed by Employee Health Service staff.

3. Those employees who have a history of respiratory disease or other conditions that may place in question their ability to wear an N-95 respirator may be asked to make an appointment to see the Employee Health physician.

4. Healthcare workers who are medically qualified to use N-95 respirators will have their names and contact information sent to EHS.

5. EHS will contact the healthcare workers and set up appointments for fit-testing.

VI. Operation of the fit-testing program for students. See Table 2

A. Medical students

1. Medical students will be fit-tested just prior to beginning their third year

2. Medical history forms will be distributed to the students by Student Wellness prior to scheduling for fit-testing

3. After clearance by Student Wellness, student names and contact information will be sent to EHS for scheduling for fit-testing

B. Nursing students will be fit-tested by group just prior to assignment to clinical training in the hospitals.

1. After notification by the School of Nursing, Student Wellness will provide medical history forms to each group of students prior to start of clinical assignments

2. After medical clearance, the names and contact information for students will be sent to EHS for scheduling for fit-testing

C. Students who fail to appear for their appointment will be reported to the Dean's office of the respective school.

TABLE 1. UTMB Fit-Testing Program
Quantitative Group

DEPARTMENT	~NUMBER EMPLOYEES
INPATIENT NURSING--ALL	**1168**
Emergency Nursing	**115**
ISCU	**119**
MICU	**43**
Med/FM	**50**
Pedi/Med-Surg	**28**
TDCJ ICU Nursing	**45**
TDCJ Med Nursing	**29**
TDCJ Holding Nursing	**26**
TDCJ Surg Nursing	**34**
TDCJ Women's Nursing	**32**
TDCJ Telemetry Nursing	**31**
RESPIRATORY THERAPY	**73**
PHYSICIANS Family Med	**31**
PHYSICIANS Internal Med	**131**
PHYSICIANS Sx-Emergency	**30**
HOUSE STAFF Family Med	**23**
HOUSE STAFF Internal Med	**145**
TOTAL	**895**

TABLE 2. UTMB Fit-Testing Program
Medical and Nursing Students

MEDICAL AND NURSING STUDENTS	
A. Third Year Medical Students	**245**
B. Nursing Students	
1) Senior year students	**###**
2) Graduate students	**###**