

How to Decontaminate & Re-Use Disposable Masks



Here are some tips on how to get the most effective and longest use out of each N95 or KN95 disposable mask. These tips are in order of priority, so apply the highest-ranking tip that is applicable to your situation and time requirements.

1. If your mask is cut or torn, severely soiled or saturated with saliva, has a damaged strap, or becomes too difficult to breathe in then replace the mask with a new one, otherwise...
2. Store the mask after daily prolonged use in a brown paper bag for 24 -48 hours, rotating masks on a daily rotating cycle if you have two or more. Mark each mask & bag with a letter or number so they don't get mixed up. This treatment can only be repeated 5 – 10 times per mask before it loses its integrity.
3. Preheat a convection oven to 75 °C and rest the mask in an oven proof container for a timed 30 minutes. This treatment can only be repeated 2 – 3 times per mask before it loses its integrity.
4. Steam-clean the mask inside a microwave oven for 3 minutes, using 2cm of water and ensuring the mask is suspended above the water but not in contact with it. Then allow to fully dry in a brown paper bag. Repeat only up to 2 – 3 times per mask before it loses its integrity.
5. To remove any biological material, including mucus and saliva, massage the mask in warm water. DO NOT USE soap, dishwashing liquid, IsoPropyl Alcohol, nor bleach as this affects the electrostatic charge on the mask's middle layer, making it less effective. Then leave it to dry 24-48 hours in a brown paper bag.

Please check-out the useful videos and guides on 3M Mask Fitting and Re-Use, at www.waitakere.org.nz under the drop-down menu “Help You > Face Masks”