



Personal protective equipment (PPE) use and conservation during the COVID-19 pandemic

The [FDA](#) and the [CDC](#) have outlined several conservation strategies based on supply levels to assist health care organizations and personnel in managing items such as surgical masks, surgical and isolation gowns, and surgical suits.

The Academy encourages members to take steps to preserve protective equipment during the COVID-19 outbreak. Hoarding in all its forms must be avoided so that urgently needed medications and supplies are available for our patients and health care responders on the front lines. The Academy is not involved in disseminating PPE. [To donate PPE](#), please reach out to your closest Office of Emergency Management. The Academy also encourages members to donate [viral transport medium supplies](#).

Disinfecting PPE:

In order to seek guidance on ways to disinfect respirators, follow [the CDC guidance on ways to decontaminate and reuse filtering facepiece respirators](#).

A recent JAAD article summarized [the use of ultraviolet germicidal irradiation \(UVGI\) as a possible method for respirator disinfection](#). The article proposed the possible repurposing of phototherapy devices, including the UVB units, to serve as a platform for ultraviolet C (UVC) germicidal disinfection.¹ Studies have shown that UVC can inactivate coronaviruses including severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus (SARS-CoV) and Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV).² Although ultraviolet germicidal irradiation (UVGI) using UVC may be one possible method for respirator disinfection, further confirmatory studies are needed.

It is hoped that using UVGI and repurposing phototherapy devices could be a practical solution considering that many of our health care providers are using substitutes for N95-F filtering facepiece respirators (FFRs).

References

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1. Hamzavi IH, Lyons AB, Kohli I, et al. (*in press*) Ultraviolet germicidal irradiation: possible method for respirator disinfection to facilitate reuse during COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology*; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaad.2020.03.085>.
2. Bedell K, Buchaklian AH, Perlman S. Efficacy of an Automated Multiple Emitter Whole-Room Ultraviolet-C Disinfection System Against Coronaviruses MHV and MERS-CoV. *Infect Control Hosp Epidemiol*. 2016;37(5):598-599.