

QEHS SPECIAL EDITION TOOLBOX

MONTHLY TOPICS
COVID-19

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SPECIAL TOPIC
Proper glove use

Glove Use during COVID-19 Pandemic

Is wearing gloves going to protect you from the virus? It really depends on the circumstances, and here's why:

COVID-19 is spread mainly in the air

The virus that causes COVID-19 is mainly spread from person to person through respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes. And that happens when people are within 6 feet of one another. The other way you can get the virus is from contaminated surfaces. So whenever you touch a surface with the virus on it and then touch your mouth, nose or eyes, you've possibly exposed yourself to the virus. However, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control says this doesn't appear to be the main way that the virus is spread.

Gloves = false sense of security?

Thoroughly washing your hands for at least 20 seconds remains the best defense against COVID-19. But when you go to the grocery or other public places, you may not have access to soap and water, hand sanitizer or wipes to clean grocery carts. That's why some people are wearing gloves. But wearing gloves can give you a false sense of security. Because the virus adheres well to latex and other types of gloves, if you touch your face at any point, you've still potentially exposed yourself to the virus.

Proper glove use is key

Plus, many people don't know the proper way to take off gloves and can contaminate their hands when taking off gloves. For example, after you take off your left glove with your right gloved hand, your left hand is at that point virus free. But if you take off your right glove by touching the outside of it, you've potentially contaminated your left hand. You need to reach inside your right glove and peel it inside out without touching the outside, which can take some skill.

Not touching anything? No need for gloves

Another thing is that if you're going for a walk and staying at least 6 feet from people, there's no need to wear gloves—the virus that causes COVID-19 is only absorbed through mucous membranes, not your hands.

If you already have gloves and wearing them in highly public places like stores and public transportation helps calm your nerves, go ahead and slide a pair on. Keep in mind that you can only use them once and need to properly take them off and immediately dispose of them. Try not to touch your face with them, and wash your hands after taking them off.

How to Remove Gloves

(Without Contaminating Yourself)

