

Disposable Filtering Facepiece Respirators

Disposable Filtering Facepiece Respirators (FFRs) are used to protect the health of people in many industrial and healthcare work environments. Disposable FFRs are intended to be discarded after first time use in healthcare. For industrial uses, respirators are permitted for extended use in accordance with National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) guidelines and should be discarded when the respirator has been soiled, damaged or has increased breathing resistance.

In healthcare settings, users are advised to discard disposable respirators after each use if:

1. The user has come in contact with persons suspected or confirmed of having various pathogens (i.e. COVID-19, tuberculosis, etc.) or;
2. The respirator has been soiled with blood or bodily fluids

Additionally, when healthcare professionals remove the respirator from their face, CDC guidance requires that it be discarded. Each healthcare facility may have their own procedures as set forth by their infection disease control coordinator.

Reusable Elastomeric Facepiece Respirators

Reusable Elastomeric Facepiece Respirators are not traditionally used in healthcare settings, however due to the supply shortage of Disposable FFRS, they are being considered for use.

It is critical to note that when these types of respirators are properly fitted and used with particulate filters (e.g. N95 or P100,) they may protect the wearer, but will not protect others in the vicinity of the wearer. This is because Reusable Elastomeric Facepiece Respirators have exhalation valves.

The Elastomeric Facepiece Respirators are designed for reuse, but proper disinfection procedures must be followed. The guidance that Moldex provides in its instructions is for industrial environments **ONLY**.

Reuse of Disposable Filtering Facepiece Respirators and Reusable Elastomeric Facepiece Respirators Amid COVID-19

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, where there is a severe shortage of disposable FFRs making single use impossible, users and healthcare facilities have inquired if there are ways to disinfect/sanitize disposable FFRs in order to provide usage beyond the standard single use.

Moldex cannot endorse or recommend any decontamination method as Moldex cannot confirm what effect these methods may have on the fit and performance of the respirators, nor the effect on the specific virus.

Further, Moldex cannot and does not recommend reuse of any disposable FFR.

Although, Moldex provides instructions on sanitizing its Reusable Elastomeric Facepiece Respirators for industrial environments, it cannot make recommendations on disinfecting respirators for COVID-19 or any other infectious agents.

Related Resources and Guidance

In light of the reported shortages of PPE to protect healthcare workers, we provide the following information for both Disposable FFRs and Reusable Elastomeric Facepiece Respirators for consideration:

For CDC guidance on the reuse of Disposable FFRs, please refer to the link below:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/decontamination-reuse-respirators.html>

For FDA guidance and methods on respirator reuse, please refer to link below:

<https://www.fda.gov/media/136449/download>

For guidance on the use of Elastomeric Facepiece Respirators, please refer to the link below:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/elastomeric-respirators-strategy/index.html>

For OSHA guidance on fit testing Disposable Filtering Facepiece Respirators during the COVID-19 outbreak, please refer to the link below:

<https://www.osha.gov/news/newsreleases/national/04082020-0>

Moldex has reviewed and contributed its expertise to the CDC and FDA guidance listed above.