

Coffee with Infection Prevention & Control

Questions & Answers on Common Doffing Mistakes and PPE Use

1. How long can we be in an enclosed room at a distance of 6 feet from a patient either with or without PPE?

At a distance of 6 feet - as long as necessary. If you are within 6 feet and not wearing PPE - as short as possible. If you are within 6 feet and wearing PPE – as long as necessary.

2. When should we wear a gown?

When providing care to a patient who is on [Contact](#), [Contact Plus](#), [Droplet & Contact](#), and [Airborne & Contact Precautions](#).

3. When wearing masks in public (grocery store) should mask be removed immediately after coming out or is it okay to wear in car and back into house and take off in the house? To avoid germ transmission?

Do not remove your mask until you are able to immediately clean your hands. Use proper technique when removing the mask and if it is a reusable mask place mask straight into laundry or if not reusable place mask straight into garbage. The use of masks in public is outside of IPAC guidance as far as strict recommendations and a personal choice.

4. Why do we sometimes see staff wearing gowns and booties in public areas like hallways and the cafeteria? Doesn't that mean they are spreading germs?

Staff should not be wearing gowns or booties in public spaces. Some staff wear gowns because they are cold. We discourage staff wearing any PPE in public areas. Because it is not clear why staff are wearing PPE it is not possible to state whether or not they are spreading germs.

5. I am a dental hygienist using surgical loops with LED light attached. Do you recommend I use a face shield in addition as to minimize contamination of wires during AGMP (ultrasonic debridement)?

This is a very specific question. The purpose of the face shield is to mitigate droplet transmission. The face shield plays the same role as eye protection. It does not affect the airborne inhalation risk. You should be wearing a N95 mask and eye protection if ultrasonic debridement is an AGMP. Loops would be difficult to do with a full face shield, so the short answer is no as long as you have another form of eye protection.