



**System Memo: # 426**

Date: November 24, 2023  
 To: All System members and NCH EMS students  
 From: Connie J. Mattera, MS, RN, PM  
 EMS Administrative Director | Paramedic Program Director

RE: **Infectious disease reminders | PPE chart**

Numbers of those ill with influenza, RSV, and Covid-19 are rising again. Below are a couple of reminders and ways to protect yourselves, co-workers, family members, and your patients:

**EMS Guideline**

- **Please stay home when you are sick. Do not care for patients while ill.** Report any S&S of COVID-19 illness or exposure, flu, or RSV infection per employer/student guidelines.
- Use excellent hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
- Wear a mask when caring for immunocompromised patients and use good judgement for masking around other vulnerable patients. Respect patients' wishes when they ask you to mask.
- If the patient has a suspected or known communicable respiratory illness: EMS & patient should both wear at least a procedural/surgical mask (N95 on EMS if airborne precautions needed – aerosolized procedure). **See PPE chart on next page**

**Recommendations**

- Anyone at high risk for severe respiratory infection should consider wearing a mask in crowded indoor areas and during close contact travel given the increase in viruses circulating right now.
- Follow employer/Student Program guidelines for receiving the annual influenza vaccine. We strongly recommend updated vaccinations for COVID-19, and if eligible, the RSV vaccine.
- Please remember that there are **effective treatment options for influenza and COVID-19** which can prevent severe disease if taken early

**We will continue to monitor local and regional trends and provide further updates as needed.**


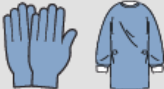












**HOW TO TELL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FLU, RSV, COVID-19, AND THE COMMON COLD**

Common symptoms may include cough, headaches, sneezing, runny nose, and congestion. Different symptoms may include:

	COLD	FLU	COVID-19	RSV
ACHES	XX	XXX	XX	X
DIFFICULTY BREATHING	X	X	XXX	XX
FATIGUE	XX	XXX	XXX	X
FEVER	X	XXX	XX	XX
LOSS OF TASTE OR SMELL	X	X	XX	X
SORE THROAT	XXX	XX	XXX	X
WHEEZING	X	X	X	XXX

Legend: X (Green) = Rarely, X (Yellow) = Sometimes, X (Red) = Often

# FIRST RESPONDER PPE CHART

	Standard Precautions	Contact Precautions	Droplet Precautions	Droplet + Contact Precautions	Airborne Precautions	Airborne + Contact Precautions
Diseases & Infestation Types	HIV, AIDS, hepatitis, cellulitis	C.Difficile, CPO, MRSA, Lice, Scabies, VRE, RSV, Norovirus	N. Meningitis, Mumps, Pertussis	Influenza, invasive Group A Streptococcus	Tuberculosis (TB), Measles	SARS-CoV-2, shingles, monkeypox, chickenpox,
Syndromic Precautions	Fever, night sweats, swollen lymph nodes, swollen skin, & inflamed with pain.	Fever, cough, wheezing, draining wound, diarrhea*, vomiting, infestation	Stiff neck, fever, headache, AMS, whooping cough, vomiting	Malaise, acute cough, sore throat, runny nose, fever, toxic shock syndrome	Fever, weight loss, cough, night sweats, skin rash	Fever, headache, rash, disseminated rash, rash similar to pimples or blisters
Responder PPE						
PPE Reminders	Use eye protection for airway procedures + gown for splash and liquid procedures	Use eye protection for airway procedures	Use a gown for splash and liquid procedures		Use eye protection for airway procedures + gown for splash and liquid procedures	
Patient Mask Needed		 Positive or suspected RSV apply mask				

\*Use an impervious patient cocoon or overall suit to contain infectious bodily fluids, if possible

**Definitions:** **AIDS** - Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome **CPO** = Carbapenemase-Producing Organisms  
**HIV** = Human Immunodeficiency Virus **MERSA** = Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus  
**RSV** = Respiratory Syncytial Virus **VRE** = Vancomycin-Resistant Enterococci