

Emory SCDP ECHO Program: Ebola Mini Series
“Ebola in the Age of COVID: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)” – July 29, 2021
[Additional Resources](#)

General considerations for choosing PPE:

- Consider the mode of transmission for the pathogen at hand: contact, droplet, or airborne.
- Think about why you are selecting the piece of PPE. What is the purpose of each PPE and how do all the parts of the PPE ensemble work together?
- Be aware that PPE needs may change over the course of treating a patient. A patient may start out “dry” and then progress to being “wet,” and vice versa. Staff should be prepared to adapt PPE accordingly, and protocols should be clearly communicated with the entire treatment team and updated regularly.
- Consider what threats your PPE might encounter when working with a patient. For example, you may be working with an infant who must be held against your body, or working with a delirious adult patient. Consider how your PPE will stand up to these threats and how you can mitigate them.
- Remember that simply wearing more PPE does not necessarily provide more protection.
- Consider the process of donning and doffing the PPE. Doffing the PPE safely is critical; unsafe doffing can lead to potential contamination. It is important to balance how safely, efficiently, and quickly the PPE can be donned and doffed with the protection the PPE provides.
- Balance the protection the PPE provides with the wearer’s comfort and ability to perform tasks. The PPE may be worn for long periods of time, and staff must be able to function effectively and as comfortably as possible during that time.
- In case of shortages, know your PPE supply chains and be ready to source substitutions and prepare staff to adapt to work with any substitutions.
- Ensure your PPE pieces are interchangeable with other pieces, in case of shortages or other disruptions.

Additional considerations for PPE in a pediatric setting:

- Pediatric care also involves the parent or caregiver, who could also become exposed to the pathogen. It is important to have a visitation plan in place ahead of time and to consider the caregivers’ PPE needs.
- Young children may be fearful of providers in full PPE, so it can be helpful to have photos of providers without PPE to try to set the child at ease and garner their trust as much as possible.

PPE training tips:

- There is no one-size fits all PPE training. You must adapt training to meet your clinic’s specific needs. However, there are many resources available, including:
 - National Emerging Special Pathogens Training and Education Center: <https://netec.org/>
 - NETEC PPE tools and resources for adult and pediatric settings: <https://repository.netecweb.org/exhibits/show/ppe101/ppe>



- Training should be as simple and streamlined as possible.
- PPE training should build staff's muscle memory to don and doff PPE.
- Staff should also practice working in complex PPE ensembles over a long period of time and communicating with each other through the PPE.
- PPE training should also clearly indicate where signage and protocols are stored in your clinic. Having your clinic's protocols easily accessible to all staff and staff knowing where to find them when needed is critical.

Resources:

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