



As Ontario opens up, family practices must have sufficient personal protective equipment (PPE) – used appropriately and with a view to conservation – and other supplies in order to conduct in-office assessments in a safe manner. As a family doctor you are in the best position to determine when an in-person visit with your patient is warranted and it is safe to do so.

See the visual guide below for tips on PPE use and re-use, as well as environmental cleaning for the clinical setting. Before every patient interaction, **screening** needs to be conducted to determine if an in-person visit is needed, and if so, what level of PPE is required.



Staying safe when providing in-person care:

- 1 All patients should wear a **cloth mask*** (may bring their own mask to the clinic).
- 2 Conduct 20-second **hand hygiene** (either soap/water or hand sanitizer) before and after all patient interactions, and after removal of PPE.
- 3 You can re-use your **procedure mask** until soiled or wet, storing in a breathable container between uses (a paper bag is reasonable). N95 masks are not required for in-clinic use as no aerosol generating procedures are performed.
- 4 PPE use is required for **all interactions within 2 metres** of patients. For patients who screen positive for COVID-19 in office, take Droplet and Contact precautions. (*surgical/procedure mask; isolation gown; gloves; eye protection*)
- 5 **Goggles or face shield** are required for patients who screen positive and should be *considered* for those who screen

negative. Goggles or face shield should be cleaned after seeing a patient who screens positive and you suspect may have COVID-19.

- 6 **Isolation gown and gloves** are not required for those who screen negative (however, gloves should be worn for all patients when vaccines are being administered). Gowns may be worn when seeing a series of patients who may have COVID-19 but should be changed if moving from a COVID suspect to a COVID negative screened patient.
- 7 [Clean touchable surfaces after every patient interaction.](#)

* Some patients with underlying health conditions may not be able to tolerate masks. For patients refusing or unable to wear a mask, family doctors need to determine the right course of action for their own circumstances (e.g., ability to isolate the patient, etc.). Those choices may involve providing in-person assessment, deferring, rescheduling, or redirecting the patient to another setting that can safely provide care to them. (For more, see the [CPSO's COVID-19 FAQs for Physicians.](#))

Turn over/see next page for more information on healthcare provider precautions from the Ministry of Health.



Summary of Required Healthcare Provider (HCP) Precautions

Adapted from Ministry of Health – [COVID-19 Operational Requirements: Health Sector Restart](#), v. 1.0 – May 26, 2020.

Family practices must have sufficient PPE and other supplies in order to conduct in-office assessments in a safe manner.

Activity	HCP Precautions
Before every patient interaction	HCP must conduct a point-of-care risk assessment * to determine the level of precautions required
All interactions within 2 metres of patients who screen negative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surgical/procedure mask required • Use of eye protection (goggles or a face shield) should be considered • Perform hand hygiene before and after contact with the patient and the patient environment and after the removal of PPE
All interactions within 2 metres of patients who screen positive	<p>Droplet and Contact precautions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surgical/procedure mask** • Isolation gown • Gloves • Eye protection (goggles or face shield) • Perform hand hygiene before and after contact with the patient and the patient environment and after the removal of PPE

* A Point-of-Care Risk Assessment (PCRA) assesses the task, the patient, and the environment. A PCRA should be completed by the HCP before every patient interaction to determine whether there is a risk to the provider or other individuals of being exposed to an infection, including COVID-19.

** N95 respirator must be worn for Aerosol-Generating Medical Procedures (AGMPs). See page 4 of this Technical Brief from Public Health Ontario for a [list of AGMPs](#).