Keeping safe in the workplace
Fit Checking

A fit check is a quick check to ensure the respirator has been properly positioned on the face and there is a good seal between the respirator and face. Fit checking (user seal-check or self-check) of respirators on each occasion of use has been, and continues to be, the most reliable method of ensuring the health worker (HW) has achieved an optimal fit and required seal in real time.

Health workers should perform a fit check each time a respirator is donned to ensure a good facial seal is achieved i.e., the respirator is sealed over the bridge of the nose, mouth and chin and there are no gaps between the respirator and the face.

How do I fit check a P2/N95 respirator?

- Adequate strap tension, not overly tight and with no twists
- Chin section properly placed under the chin
- No hair or jewellery under neck strap
- Respirator of proper size to span the distance from nose to chin
- Fit across the nose bridge – smooth down the nose (do not pinch)
- Eyewear arms over elastic straps (glasses and/or eye protection)
- Check the tendency of the respirator to slip
- Self-observation in a mirror to evaluate fit and respirator position if available or use a buddy

Gently inhale (negative pressure user seal check), the respirator user inhales sharply while blocking the paths for air to enter the facepiece. A successful check is when the facepiece collapses slightly (depending on the make of the respirator this may not occur) under the negative pressure that is created with this procedure.

Gently exhale (positive pressure user seal check), the respirator user exhales gently while blocking the paths for air to exit the facepiece. A successful check is when the facepiece is slightly pressurised before increased pressure causes outward leakage. It is important at this stage that there is NO air leakage around the edges of the respirator. There may be a small amount of eyewear fogging.

Follow manufacturer's instructions on fit checking for every specific respirator.

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