

Effectiveness of N95 respirators versus surgical masks against influenza: a systematic review and meta-analysis.

April 29, 2020

Long Y, Hu T, Liu L, et al. Effectiveness of N95 respirators versus surgical masks against influenza: a systematic review and meta-analysis. J Evid Based Med. 2020. doi:10.1111/jebm.12381.

<https://psnet.ahrq.gov/issue/effectiveness-n95-respirators-versus-surgical-masks-against-influenza-systematic-review-and>

This systematic review pooled data from six trials involving over 9,100 patients to assess the effectiveness of N95 respirators versus surgical masks for flu prevention in hospital and community settings. The meta-analysis found no significant difference between N95 respirators and surgical masks in preventing laboratory-confirmed influenza, respiratory infections or influenza-like illness. The authors conclude that N95 respirators should not be recommended for the general public and should be [reserved](#) for high-risk medical staff in close contact with diagnosed or suspected influenza patients.