

# Researchers identify N95 respirator decontamination method using microwave-generated steam

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Due to the rapid spread of COVID-19, there is an increasing shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) crucial to protecting health care

workers from infection. N95 respirators are recommended by the CDC as the ideal protection method from COVID-19 and, although traditionally single-use, PPE shortages have necessitated the need for reuse.

New research published this week in *mBio* an open-access journal of the American Society for Microbiology, describes an effective, standardized method of decontamination for hospitals and health care centers facing N95 respirator shortages.

The researchers, from Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Harvard University and Massachusetts General Hospital, have detailed a reproducible decontamination approach that all [health care workers](#) would be able to utilize. "We identified an effective method of N95 decontamination by microwave-generated steam utilizing universally accessible materials. Our method resulted in almost complete sterilization after only 3 min of treatment and did not appear to affect the integrity of N95 filtration or fit with repeated treatment," the researchers write.

Provided by American Society for Microbiology

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