



Dear Tulane Health System colleagues,

We are continuing to do everything we can to equip our patient care teams to provide safe, effective care during this unprecedented crisis. This pandemic has strained the worldwide supply of personal protective equipment, so these circumstances require a thoughtful, pragmatic approach to ensure the safety of our colleagues and the wellbeing of our patients.

One such approach is sterilizing N-95 masks so they may be safely used more than once. We are collaborating with the Tulane University School of Medicine on an innovative process that uses vaporized hydrogen peroxide, which breaks down into oxygen and water and leaves no toxic residue, to sterilize these masks.

The process has been tested by the federal government and has been shown to effectively sterilize the mask with no degradation of its effectiveness for up to 30 recycles. At that point, the elastic in the straps starts to deteriorate – but the mask itself remains effective. We plan to not exceed 20 cycles of N-95 masks.

We are optimistic, as this process will obviously extend our supply to a significant degree. Other institutions have received FDA approval to use this process, and we anticipate receiving the same approval shortly. We will not begin recycling masks via this process until that approval is granted. For now, we have started handing out N-95 masks with staff's names on them. Please return your labeled masks to the green bags after use so we can begin collecting them in anticipation of this process going into effect soon. And please continue to use the N-95s – and all your PPE – as currently instructed.

Thank you again for your cooperation and service to those in need.

Sincerely,

Dr. Bob Lynch  
CEO  
Tulane Health System