

Lab Coat Safety Protocols

The current global shortage of disposable gowns has made a single use practice unsustainable for all procedures. Reusable fluid resistant lab coats have long been the standard of care in the dental setting, and, with some additional safeguards, continue to be recommended protocol. Lab coats are not only safe, but they are more economical than disposable gowns:

- Disposable Lab Gowns \$3.10 per use
- Cintas Reusable Lab Coats \$0.17 per use

The Covid-19 is not a living organism but rather a protein molecule which actually disintegrates over time even if no disinfectant is used. The disintegration rate/time depends upon the surface that the particle is on. It disintegrates in 3 to 4 hours on a cloth surface such as a lab coat. We have established the following protocol for Reusable (Cintas) lab coats and Disposable Gowns.

Cintas Reusable Lab Coats

1. The same lab coat can be worn throughout appointments that do not create aerosols or when there is no soiling of the coat during an aerosol appointment.
2. If during an aerosol appointment the coat should become soiled then one would remove the coat and hang to dry in a bright, open area for 3 to 4 hours. The coat should not be in contact with another coat while hanging. The coat can be reused but a reused coat can only be re-donned by the same wearer.
3. While waiting for the original coat the wearer can don a new coat and wear until the next aerosol contamination.
4. Each provider/assistant who works around aerosols should have access to a least 3 to 4 coats to allow for proper rotation and disinfection.
5. Appointments that include aerosol generation should include as many procedures as possible, (quadrant or bi quadrant dentistry) to minimize frequency of exposure and to conserve resources.
6. At the end of the day all used coats are to be placed in the used coat receptacle for pick up by the Cintas drivers

Disposable Gowns

1. Disposable gowns should only be worn during very High Aerosol procedures and surgeries. Disposable gowns should be disposed of after use thus making it necessary to use for only the most extensive of treatments.

2. Disposable gowns are only to be worn by the provider and the assistant in the room where the aerosols are being generated. All others should be wearing Cintas reusable coats.
3. Front office staff should never wear disposable gowns. They should always wear reusable Cintas Coats utilizing the same coat throughout the work week, hanging the coat properly at the end of the day.