Technical Section

TECHNICAL NOTES & TIPS

TECHNICAL NOTES

Double-mask technique for shielding the face and eyes during surgical procedures

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BACKGROUND

Medical professionals use a combination of facemask, goggles and surgical masks with visors to protect their faces and eyes from airborne particles during surgery. We have tried different types of face/eye protection and have found that most either steam-up, are uncomfortable to wear, or may interfere with hearing. We describe a double-mask technique, with a mask with the visor turned upside-down.

TECHNIQUE

Wear the mask without visor first, then turn the mask with visor (Fig. 1) upside-down. Fold the soft part of the mask in half (Fig. 2)

and tie it to the back with the folded part on the forehead and the visor pointing downward (Fig. 3).

DISCUSSION

This is an easy, effective and cheaper way to protect the face and eyes from airborne particles. We have found this technique comfortable with less tendency to steam-up and no interference with hearing. In our hospital, the cost for the visor mask (Kimberly-Clark or Secure-Guard) is between £0.25 to £0.55 per mask. Custom-made visors, however, cost more than this, an example being the Splash Guard Surgical Shield, which costs £1.60 per mask. Significant savings can be made by using the technique described.

Figure 2 Folding the visor.

Figure 1 Preparation of visor.

Figure 3 Visor as worn.