



How to fit test an FFP3 respirator

Fit testing should be carried out by a properly trained and competent fit tester. These instructions are a guide to how fit testing should be carried out. Fit testing assesses how well a respirator is sealed to your face. Qualitative fit testing relies on subjective sensation – in this case, taste.

Qualitative fit testing is performed in two parts:

Step 1: The sensitivity test (or taste test):

This test is to check if and at what point you can taste the sensitivity test solution. It is done without wearing the respirator. There are two types of test solution: bitrex (bitter) or saccharin (sweet).

Step 2: The fit test:

This test is to check the fit of the respirator; if it is fitted correctly then you should not be able to taste the test solution.

Before the test:

You should not eat, drink (except water), smoke or chew gum for at least 30 minutes before the test.

Step 1: The Sensitivity Test (Without Wearing the Respirator)

Set Up

1. Place a few drops of the sensitivity test solution into the sensitivity nebuliser.
2. Put the test hood on the person (without the respirator).
3. Instruct them to indicate as soon as they taste the solution.

Begin The Test

5. Remove both plugs and insert the nozzle of the nebuliser into the hole at the front of the hood. While keeping the nebuliser vertical, squeeze the bulb firmly, fully collapsing the bulb and allowing it to expand again fully. Do not squeeze directly into the person's mouth.
6. Apply up to 10 squeezes.
7. If tasted, note the number of squeezes as 10 and proceed to the fit test.
8. If the person has not tasted the solution after 10 squeezes, apply up to 10 additional squeezes. If tasted, note the number of squeezes as 20 and proceed to the fit test.
9. If the person has not tasted the solution after 20 squeezes, apply up to 10 additional squeezes. If tasted, note the number of squeezes as 30 and proceed to the fit test.
10. Finally, remove the hood and allow the person to rinse their mouth with water and wipe their face.

Notes

- If no taste is detected by 30 squeezes, then try the alternative solution using the same procedure.
- If the person is unable to taste either solution, then quantitative fit testing is suggested using Portacount.
- The person should not proceed to the fit test stage until the taste of the sensitivity test solution has been allowed to clear. This usually takes about 10 minutes. A drink of water may help.

Step 2: The Fit Test (Wearing the Respirator)

Set Up

1. Make sure the FFP3 respirator is fitted correctly on the person and a fit check has been conducted.
2. Place a small amount of the fit test solution into the fit test nebuliser.
3. Put the test hood on the person.
4. Ask the person to breathe through their mouth with their tongue at the front.
5. Instruct them to indicate immediately if the solution is tasted.

Begin The Test

5. Introduce the solution in an initial dose. Refer to the table below for the appropriate amount.

Number of squeezes for initial dose	Number of squeezes for 'top-up' dose (added every 30 seconds)
10	5
20	10
30	15

6. After the initial dose determined in the sensitivity test, ask the person to carry out the seven exercises opposite for one minute each.
7. Remember to add a 'top-up' dose every 30 seconds and record the results.
8. Throughout the fit test, make sure that you can see the spray Coming out of the nebuliser. If it cannot be seen, the nebuliser may have become blocked; unblock before restarting.

Notes

- If the solution is not tasted after all seven exercises, the person has passed the test with that respirator.
- If the solution is tasted, stop the test. After the taste of the fit test solution has been allowed to clear, repeat the set up stage and start the fit test again.
- If the solution is tasted for a second time, record a fail and try a different size or model of respirator

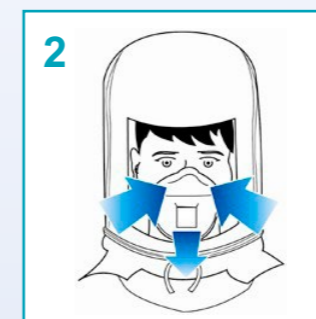
Fit test exercises

These exercises simulate some of the stresses that the FFP3 face seal may undergo during your work. You must perform each of the exercises in order to ensure a successful test. Each exercise should last approximately one minute. Breathe through your mouth throughout.



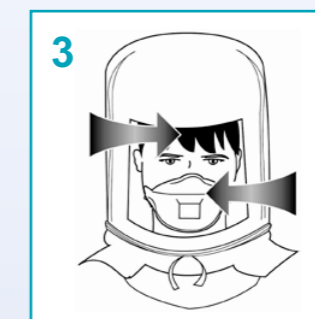
Normal breathing

Breathe normally with no head movements or talking.



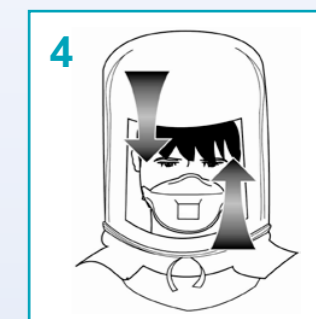
Deep breathing

Breathe slowly and deeply.



Turning head from side to side

Slowly turn your head from side to side as far as you can. Look over each shoulder momentarily and inhale.



Moving head up and down

Slowly move your head up and down, inhaling when you are facing upwards (towards the ceiling).



Bending over

From a standing position, bend at the waist as if to touch your toes.



Talking

Speak slowly and loudly enough so your fit tester can hear you clearly.



Normal breathing

Breathe normally with no head movements or talking.

These images are for illustrative purposes only. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Remember

- Fit testing should be carried out by a properly trained competent fit tester in accordance with the manufacturers instructions.
- Other guidance is available on bacterial infections and pulmonary tuberculosis
- Support guidance is available at www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/fittesting.pdf