

2021 年度初期臨床研修医師採用試験（英語：50 分）

次の英文を和訳してください。

Universal Masking in Hospitals in the Covid-19 Era

We know that wearing a mask outside health care facilities offers little, if any, protection from infection. Public health authorities define a significant exposure to Covid-19 as face-to-face contact within 6 feet with a patient with symptomatic Covid-19 that is sustained for at least a few minutes (and some say more than 10 minutes or even 30 minutes). The chance of catching Covid-19 from a passing interaction in a public space is therefore minimal.

The calculus may be different, however, in health care settings. First and foremost, a mask is a core component of the personal protective equipment clinicians need when caring for symptomatic patients with respiratory viral infections, in conjunction with gown, gloves, and eye protection. Masking in this context is already part of routine operations for most hospitals. What is less clear is whether a mask offers any further protection in health care settings in which the wearer has no direct interactions with symptomatic patients. There are two scenarios in which there may be possible benefits.

The first is during the care of a patient with unrecognized Covid-19. A mask alone in this setting will reduce risk only slightly, however, since it does not provide protection from droplets that may enter the eyes or from fomites on the patient or in the environment that providers may pick up on their hands and carry to their mucous membranes.

More compelling is the possibility that wearing a mask may reduce the likelihood of transmission from asymptomatic and minimally symptomatic health care workers with Covid-19 to other providers and patients. This concern increases as Covid-19 becomes more widespread in the community. We face a constant risk that a health care worker with early infection may bring the virus into our facilities and transmit it to others. Transmission from people with asymptomatic infection has been well documented, although it is unclear to what extent such transmission contributes to the overall spread of infection.