FIT TEST PROCEDURES – REVIEW

General Requirements:

* For any tight-fitting facepiece.
* Prior to initial use.
* Wheneverdifferent respirator is used.
* At least annually thereafter.
* Whenever appearance changes (facial scarring, dental changes, change in weight).
* Whenever change in medical condition affecting pulmonary function.
* Cannot be conducted if there is any hair growth between the skin and the facepiece sealing surface – any apparel must be altered or removed.
* May not eat, drink (except water), smoke, or chew gum 15 minutes before test (prior email).

Medical Aspects:

* Must be medically cleared prior to using respirator – for fit testing as well as for work.
* Caution that if difficulty breathing during fit testing exercises occurs, the test should be stopped.

Model Selection:

* Must be fit tested with the same make, model, style, and size of respirator that will be used.
* Allow to pick the most acceptable respirator from sufficient number of modes and sizes.
* Wear selected respirator at least 5 minutes to assess comfort.

Respirator Wear: (may wait till actual Fit Test step below)

Equipment Assembly:

* Assemble hood and check for tears.
* Assemble nebulizers; ensure that nebulizer is free of crystals and not clogged.
* Use separate nebulizer for Threshold Taste solution and Fit Test solution.
* Place nebulizers and solutions in a consistent position.
* Place small amount of solution in nebulizer – enough to cover vent.

Fit Test Description:

* The entire screening and testing procedure shall be explained to the test subject prior to the conduct of the screening test. The description of the process shall include a description of the test exercises.
  + Two steps: Taste Threshold Screening (Sensitivity Test) and actual Fit Test.
  + Ask if subject thinks they would have problems with any of the exercises (may quit if needed).

Taste Threshold Screening Procedures:

* Position the hood over test subject not wearing respirator; show finger hole in collar.
* Instruct the subject to breathe through their mouth with tongue extended and report any taste.
* Hold nebulizer in full hand and squeeze nebulizer hard enough to aerosolize the dilute solution. Rapidly inject 10 squeezes from the sensitivity test solution nebulizer into the hood.
* Ask the subject if they can detect a bitter taste (may stop whenever they say they can taste it).
  + If yes: note the number of squeezes.
  + If no: rapidly inject 10 additional squeezes.
* If the Bitrex is not tasted after 30 squeezes the subject is unable to use this fit test method.
* Wait 15 minutes and repeat same procedure with saccharin solution if unable to taste Bitrex.

Respirator Wear:

* Prior to fit testing procedure, review donning/doffing procedures – allow time for practice.
* Inspect respirator – tears, wetness, stains, elastic straps, etc.
* Explain Donning – manufacturer’s instructions; avoid crisscross; adjust hair, apparel.
* Explain Seal Check – positive and negative; don’t want air thru seal; may not feel movement.
* Wear safety equipment during fit test if worn during actual respirator use.
* May cover doffing at end of fit test – don’t touch contaminated surface; handle by elastic straps.

Fit Test Procedures:

* May allow to drink water prior to clear taste from Sensitivity Test, but do not eat, drink, smoke, or chew gum for 15 minutes prior to test.
* Don respirator, perform seal check, and position hood.
* Instruct the subject to breathe through their mouth with tongue extended and report any taste.
* Insert nebulizer into hole in hood and rapidly spray number of squeezes of full strength solution based on number needed to elicit taste response during screening test (minimum of 10 squeezes required).
* With subject standing, perform fit test exercises (7 exercises x 60 seconds each).
  + Think of as fourteen 30 second segments.
* Every 30 seconds replenish solution concentration using one-half the original number of squeezes.
  + May stop action to replenish – then complete next segment for entire 30 second.
* If the subject does not report tasting the test solution during the procedure, the test is passed.
* If the subject reports tasting the test solution during the procedure, the test is failed.
  + Repeat entire fit test procedure (threshold and fit testing) with a different respirator.
  + Wait 15 minutes before beginning new fit test.
* Check for nebulizer clogging during test.
* If nebulizer is clogged at end of test, test is invalid. Repeat entire procedure.
* Test procedure same for both Bitrex and saccharin.
* Employer responsible for maintaining records of fit testing (until next fit test).
  + Name of employee
  + Type of test (QLFT)
  + Specific respirator tested
  + Date of test
  + Results of test
* At end of Fit Test procedure, remind test subject to properly doff the respirator.