



Long Island Jewish
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July 21, 1994

Via Airborne Express

NIOSH Docket Office
Robert A. Taft Laboratories
Mail Stop C34
4676 Columbia Parkway
Cincinnati, OH 54226

Dear Sir/Madam:

I fully endorse the testimony concerning the nature of masks to protect against the airborne transmission of pathogenic microorganisms delivered by a representative of the Health Care Association of New York State at a public meeting convened by your organization during June 1994 in Washington, D.C.

I join Ms. McBreen in congratulating NIOSH for recognizing the need to establish more tolerable criteria for such protection and urge consideration of the biological aspects of bacterial respiratory pathogens that demand exclusion of biological particles equal or greater than 1.0 micrometer other than HEPA filter masks. Presently available filters that exclude particles of 0.1 micrometers can be adopted to fit the face and be used without the superfluous personal discomfort that will make many workers in the health care setting refuse to follow instructions. In addition, their much more reasonable cost will not pose a danger to the financial health of medical facilities that must provide HEPA filter masks to an appreciable number of health care workers.

I thank you for the opportunity to share with you my conviction that bacterial pathogens can be excluded safely from the respiratory tract of health care workers conveniently and at a reasonable cost.

Sincerely yours,

Henry D. Isenberg, Ph.D.
Chief, Division of Microbiology
Chairman, Infection Control Committee
Professor of Laboratory Medicine

cc: David Dantzker, MD, Acting President
Elkin Simson, MD, Assoc. Chairman, Clinical Pathology

JUL 25 1994