

Nursing Uniform Scrubs

Nursing uniforms have witnessed a great evolution during the last century or so. In the first two decades of the 20th century, a nurse's uniform usually was an ankle-length dress with detachable collar and neck. The front of the dress was covered by a massive starched apron and a cap, resembling a mushroom, announced her professional identity. In the course of the next few decades, the uniforms underwent a huge change: the starched aprons were given a farewell, and hems and sleeves were cut short. The styles often reflected the mode of the time, albeit in a conservative manner. Graduate nurses normally wore white, and student nurses sometimes wore blue, pink or checked uniforms, so that the two could be distinguished by color. Nurses wore capes for outer wear, mostly navy blue with red lining, embroidered with hospital initials. With the advent of the '70s, hospitals began to relax the rules and uniforms were done away with. Now most nurses can choose their own clothing, which in most cases is a pantsuit or comfortable surgery "scrub suit." Scrubs are usually made from a 65/35 polyester/cotton blend for durability, although some are made with 100% cotton to ensure maximum comfort. These run the risk of shrinking and fading after washing, however. One can find unisex medical scrubs also that are meant for both men and women. Different hospitals follow different attire policies. In some hospitals, you are free to choose your own colors and styles. Some will provide you scrubs to be worn on the premises only (washed daily and reused). And some will purchase scrubs for you. The final decision usually rests with the authorities, though your views may not be ignored altogether. Some hospitals insist on a blue-scrubs-only policy in the operating room, in order to prevent patients from getting infected. One should also remember that wearing a tee shirt underneath one's scrub, if it extends beyond the scrub, can increase chances of infection.

About the Author

Music in Hospitals is a registered charity, whose mission is to improve the quality of life of adults. For information on Music in Hospitals, Scotland.

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