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Nurse Leslie Green hates the "pukey green potato sack" she has to wear in the Buffalo General Hospital operating room.

Scrub suits have traditionally been made of bedsheets dyed green and cut into baggy unisex patterns. They're made to last. Hospitals generally buy seven to nine changes a person and replace them after two years or at least 100 washings. And until a few years ago, doctors and nurses like Miss Green had no reason to expect their new scrubs to be anything different.

But now, according to uniform suppliers like Robert Sislian, president of Work Wear Corp.'s health-care unit, fashion scrubs amount to about 30% of the more than \$30 million a year scrub market, and the percentage is growing rapidly.

Mr. Sislian's offerings include a mauve button-up jacket in a paisley print teamed with a cranberry V-neck top piped in mint. The outfit has co-ordinating accessories—mint-trimmed mask, matching overshoes, cranberry cap. Mr. Sislian says men tend to prefer "our Brooks Brothers blues."

A competitor, Superior Surgical Manufacturing Co., recently offered a range of scrubs in khaki. And American Hospital Supply Co. says it has expanded beyond bright colors and fashionable styles. "We provide scrub wear made out of apparel quality fabric," says James Hickey, vice president of sales.

Doris Davis, consultative specialist for the Association of Operating Room Nurses, thinks

doctors like to see the nurses in colors. "They say it looks nice against the gray operating room walls," she says.

Valerie Hall, operating room staff nurse at the District of Columbia General Hospital, isn't so easily pleased. She likes the light blue color of her scrubs but has reservations about the fit. "If I were a patient," says Nurse Hall, "I would feel more secure—even though I know that is no way to judge competence—if the people around me looked dressed for work rather than housework."

But many other people appreciate the scrubs' ambiguity. William Baiocchi, who is assistant operating room and anesthesia administrator at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, says, "People use them when they change the oil, when they jog, and kids think it's the in thing to wear."

That's why all Henry Ford scrub suits bear an inscription, and it isn't a designer's signature. It reads: "Property of Henry Ford Hospital. Never sold. Unauthorized possession of this article constitutes theft by conversion."