



EHS Fact Sheet

Latex Allergy

What Causes Latex Allergy

1. Latex allergy reactions result from exposure to either the proteins or chemicals found in natural rubber latex products.
2. The proteins may also adhere to the powder used on some gloves to make them easier to put on and take off.
3. Regular and repeated use of latex gloves can result in the wearer becoming highly sensitive to the proteins or chemicals found in any latex product.

What Products Contain Latex

1. Balloons
2. Latex gloves
3. Rubber toys
4. Pacifiers and baby-bottle nipples
5. Rubber bands
6. Adhesive medical tape
7. Medical bandages

Symptoms of Latex Allergy

1. Itchy, red, watery eyes
2. Sneezing or runny nose
3. Coughing
4. Rash or hives
5. Chest tightness
6. Shortness of breath
7. Skin redness
8. Scratchy throat
9. Loss of consciousness
10. Anaphylactic shock



Latex Allergy Prevention

1. Depending on the exposure, workers can get the required level of protection from nitrile, vinyl or other synthetic gloves.
2. When latex gloves are used, powder-free gloves with reduced protein content should be used.
3. Use appropriate work practices to reduce the chance of reactions to latex.
4. When wearing latex gloves, do not use oil-based hand creams or lotions (which can cause glove deterioration).
5. After removing latex gloves, wash hands with a mild soap and dry thoroughly.
6. Practice good housekeeping: frequently clean areas and equipment contaminated with latex-containing dust.
7. Learn to recognize the symptoms of latex allergy: skin rash; hives; flushing; itching; nasal, eye, or sinus symptoms; asthma; and (rarely) shock.
8. Avoid contact with latex gloves and products.
9. Avoid areas where you might inhale the powder from latex gloves worn by other workers.
10. Tell your employer and health care providers (physicians, nurses, dentists, etc.) that you have a latex allergy.

CDC Latex Allergy Safety

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/98-113/pdfs/98-113.pdf>