



# EHS Fact Sheet

## Latex Allergy

### What Causes a Latex Allergy

- Latex allergy reactions result from exposure to either the proteins or chemicals found in natural rubber latex products.
- The proteins may also adhere to the powder used on some gloves to make them easier to put on and take off.
- 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

- Balloons
- Latex gloves
- Rubber toys
- Pacifiers and baby-bottle nipples
- Rubber bands
- Adhesive medical tape
- Medical bandages

### Symptoms of a Latex Allergy

- Itchy, red, watery eyes
- Sneezing or runny nose
- Coughing
- Rash or hives
- Chest tightness
- Shortness of breath
- Skin redness
- Scratchy throat
- Loss of consciousness
- Anaphylactic shock

### Latex Allergy Prevention

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

[Latex Allergy Prevention Guide](#)

