



Saskatchewan Health Authority

Procedure

Saskatoon & Area - Occupational Health & Safety

Number: 51-004

Title: Chemical Hazard: Latex Allergy

Saskatchewan Employment Act:

OHS Regulation: 7-1, 7-2

Date: January 1, 2017

Date Revised/Reaffirmed: December 2, 2021

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Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to establish the processes to follow in order to **eliminate** occupational exposure to Latex (removal of rubber glove allergens) and **implement** substitution of all Latex products where applicable

Procedure for Employees to follow

- Worker to notify manager/supervisor immediately of a possible latex allergy
- Worker to report possible allergic reaction by contacting the Safety Alert System/Incident Report Line
- Manager to investigate and review incident and follow up with the worker
- Occupational Health Nurse to review incident and ensure appropriate corrective action was implemented
- Employee is referred to Employee Wellness and Accommodations (EWA) for appropriate management
- If medical attention is required, worker to take the SHR Employee Incident Reporting Package with them to the appointment

Supposition

In the health care environment, the single most important step in creating a latex-safe environment is the elimination of powdered latex medical devices. There are thousands of healthcare and consumer products that are commercially available and may potentially contain latex. It is very difficult to obtain full and accurate information on the latex content of products since products may vary between companies and product series. The primary resource for obtaining information on latex content is from the individual product manufacturers.

Latex-Safe = Safer Patient Care

Recent studies have demonstrated that adopting latex-free strategies in health care facilities has reduced the prevalence of latex sensitization and allergy in children with spina bifida (26.7 to 4.5%), myelomeningocele (4 to 1.2%) and a history of multiple surgeries (42 to 7%). One pediatric hospital that adopted a latex-free recently reported zero incidences of allergic reactions in 25,000 anesthetic incidents for children.

- *Perioperative Latex Allergy in Children Anesthesiology Journal March 2011*

Latex-Safe = Retention

Health Care Workers who demonstrated latex sensitization were nearly three times more likely to leave their jobs than their non-sensitized co-workers. "Prevention of IgE Sensitization to Latex in Health Care Workers after Reduction of Antigen Exposures"

- *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine August 2011*

Materials

- [Latex Safe Poster](#)

Non-Compliance/Breach:

Non-compliance with this policy will result in a review of the incident. A review for non-compliance may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or privileges; fines and /or prosecution of individuals under the Saskatchewan Employment Act and OHS Regulations.

Resources

- Policy and Procedure Nursing Manual, Latex Allergy policy 1011
<https://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/about/NursingManual/1011.pdf>

Review Dates:

January 1, 2017

April 20, 2018

December 2, 2021