



WHY CONSIDER LATEX FREE?

Natural rubber latex is known to cause Type I and Type IV allergic reactions:

- Type I, or **immediate-type hypersensitivity**
- Type IV, or **delayed-type hypersensitivity**

(NHS Plus, Royal College of Physicians, Faculty of Occupational Medicine. Latex allergy: occupational aspects of management. A national guideline. London: RCP, 2008.)

At least **13 proteins** have been identified by the International Union of Immunological Societies (IUIS) as latex-specific allergens **capable of causing type I allergy** (immediate-type hypersensitivity).

Clinical manifestations may be cutaneous, ocular, respiratory or systemic.

They range from:

contact urticaria, itching of the skin and eyes, sneezing, bronchospasm and asthma, to anaphylaxis (which may occur in people previously unknown to be sensitised).

(Preventing Allergic reactions Preventing Allergic Reactions to Natural Rubber latex- June 1997 Pub No. 97-135)

The **prevalence** of a type I allergy is estimated to be as high as **17%** in healthcare workers (HCW). HCWs have an increased risk of sensitisation and allergic symptoms to latex and prevention of latex allergies in HCWs is clearly needed.

J Allergy Clin Immunol. 2006 Aug;118(2):447-54. Epub 2006 Jul 3 Natural rubber latex allergy among health care workers: a systematic review of the evidence.

Even more commonly Type IV, or delayed-type hypersensitivity may be identified by the clinical presentation of a **vesicular, eczematous or pruritic dermatitis** appearing **hours to days after contact with the allergen**.

(NHS Plus, Royal College of Physicians, Faculty of Occupational Medicine. Latex allergy: occupational aspects of management. A national guideline. London: RCP, 2008.)

Development of a serious latex allergy could have severe implications on your ability to practice and evidently poses a risk for your patients.

St George's Hospital Trust takes these risks extremely seriously and therefore we **invite you to participate in this gloves evaluation** and kindly ask that you **complete the attached form** when possible.