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## *Information for You from Your Health Care Team*

### **Latex Allergy**

#### **What is latex?**

- Latex is made from the sap of a rubber tree.
- Many products are made from latex such as: rubber gloves, balloons, rubber bands, condoms, toys and elastic in waistbands.

#### **What is a latex allergy?**

Latex allergy is a response to the latex protein. Depending on how sensitive you are, the response can be mild or severe with symptoms such as:

- Itchy, red watery eyes
- Sneezing or runny nose
- Hives or rash
- Nausea , vomiting, diarrhea

#### **If very allergic you could have life threatening symptoms such as:**

- Difficulty breathing
- Dizziness or fainting
- Rise or drop in blood pressure

#### **Who is at risk of having an allergy to latex?**

- Health care workers
- People who have spina bifida
- If you have allergies to avocados, chestnuts, kiwis and tomatoes
- If you are exposed to latex often

#### **What should you do if you have a latex allergy?**

- Avoid contact with products containing latex and be aware of hidden sources
- Make sure to let health care providers know
- Wear a medical alert bracelet or necklace
- If you are very sensitive talk to your health care provider about having an emergency kit
- Educate your friends and family about your allergy

**Speak up if you have any questions or concerns**

Resources: [www.osha.gov/SLTC/latexallergy](http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/latexallergy)

Latex Allergy Information Service: 1-860-482-6869



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Natural Rubber Latex Products	Substitutes
<b>For Babies</b>	
Pacifiers, feeding nipples	Silicone products
<b>For school and office</b>	
Erasers, craft supplies, make-up and Halloween masks, adhesives	Look for products labeled vinyl or silicone
<b>Clothing</b>	
Elastic fabric, diapers, underwear	Many elastic fabrics are not rubber (for instance "Spandex" and "Lycra") but elastic webbing often contains rubber
<b>Housework</b>	
Cleaning gloves	Gloves are a major source of exposure because they are in direct contact with the skin for a long time and may give off an allergenic dust - use nitrile, neoprene, vinyl or copolymer gloves.
<b>Toys and sporting goods</b>	
Balloons, Koosh balls, rubber ducks, soccer balls, volleyballs, coated or taped racquet handles	Mylar (foil type) balloons, leather balls
<b>Furnishings</b>	
Rubber mats, carpet backing, foam rubber	Most foam rubber is polyurethane foam and will not cause problems
<b>Medical Products</b>	
Condoms, female condoms, diaphragms	Synthetic rubber or natural membrane condoms
Medical gloves, dental dams	As with household gloves above, use only gloves made with synthetic materials
First aid tape, bandages	Some brands do not contain natural rubber latex

\*It is not possible to list every product. This is just a sample

**Speak up if you have questions or concerns**