

SCHOOL HEALTH WORKERS ALERT

Latex Gloves Can Cause Dangerous Allergic Reactions

Some children exposed to latex gloves, and some people who work with latex gloves, may have serious allergic reactions.

Latex gloves can cause:

- Red, itchy skin rash
- Hives
- Itchy, watery eyes
- Runny nose
- Sinus problems
- Breathing problems (asthma)
- Life-threatening reactions

How can you get an allergic reaction from latex gloves?

- If you wear or touch latex gloves, or latex finger cots
- If you touch something that has been touched with latex gloves
- If you breathe latex particles in the air

Who can get allergic problems from latex gloves and other latex items?

- Workers who wear latex gloves a lot
- Children and adults who already have allergies, hay fever, asthma or skin problems
- Babies and children who have allergies or are more sensitive, and have been close to or touched by latex gloves

How can you prevent Latex Allergy problems?

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) says latex gloves can cause serious allergic reactions. Protect school health workers, food service workers and school children from allergic reactions that are easy to prevent.

School Districts should follow these directions:

- Do not use latex gloves in school settings.
- Employers should provide workers with vinyl, polyvinyl chloride or other non-latex gloves.
- Remember, even when wearing gloves, wash your hands often to stop the spread of disease.
- Be aware that there are other latex items besides gloves that may be problematic for sensitive people (e.g. rubber bands, erasers, band aids, catheters, etc.).