



Malaysian Rubber Export Promotion Council



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NHS Plus, the Royal College of Physicians and the Faculty of Occupational Medicine
2008 Guideline:

“Latex Allergy: Occupational Aspects of Management. A National Guideline”

Switching to powder-free gloves as an alternative to powdered latex gloves was found to significantly reduce latex allergy and latex-induced asthma.

Standard Malaysian Glove



POWDER-FREE

Your Choice for Quality



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NHS Plus, The Royal College of Physicians and the Faculty of Occupational Medicine have developed new evidence-based guidance for the occupational health management of latex allergy.

Switching to powder-free gloves as an alternative to powdered latex gloves was found to significantly reduce latex allergy and latex-induced asthma. The guideline also recommends that employees with a latex allergy use non-latex gloves, although a complete ban on latex gloves is not advocated.

The key findings and recommendations are:

- The use of powder-free, low protein latex gloves as an alternative to powdered latex gloves significantly reduces the incidence of latex allergy and latex-induced asthma, as well as the prevalence of latex-related symptoms. Powdered latex gloves should therefore not be used in the workplace.
- At a national and local level, a policy that encourages switching from powdered latex gloves to powder-free low protein latex gloves is a proven effective method of reducing the incidence of latex allergy.
- Employees with latex allergy, latex sensitivity or latex-induced asthma should use non-latex gloves.
- In employees who are latex allergic/sensitized, taking latex avoidance measures results in cessation or diminution of symptoms. Markers of sensitization decrease regardless of whether co-workers continue to use powder-free low protein latex gloves or latex-free gloves.
- In employees with latex-induced asthma or rhinitis, the use of powder-free low protein gloves by their colleagues reduces symptoms and indices of severity in the affected employee to a similar degree as the use of non-latex gloves by colleagues.
- All but the most severe cases of latex allergy and latex-induced asthma can be managed without the need for redeployment, ill health retirement or termination of employment. Adjustments include careful personal avoidance of latex at work and minor changes in the workplace.
- There is a lack of published primary research comparing occupational interventions for those who are sensitized to latex (without symptoms), with those with clinical latex allergy.
- No reports of new cases of latex allergy arising from non-powdered low protein latex glove use were found.

The guideline concludes that “the evidence does not therefore support a complete ban on the use of latex gloves. Institutions should judge whether their needs would be met better by the use of latex-free or powder-free latex gloves, or use of both in different settings, while taking into account the desirable and undesirable properties of both materials.”

Source:

NHS Plus, Royal College of Physicians, Faculty of Occupational Medicine. *Latex Allergy: occupational aspects of management. A national guideline.* London: RCP, 2008. <http://www.rcplondon.ac.uk/pubs/contents/f0ba0178-f790-48e8-a764-b319357f974a.pdf> Copyright © 2008 Royal College of Physicians. Reproduced by permission.

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