



*When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.<sup>SM</sup>*

**Helping Hand™**

## **Allergy to Latex**

Latex is the milky sap from the rubber tree. It is used to make many rubber products that are used in the hospital, home and community. If your child is allergic to this milky sap, he or she has a latex allergy.

**A child who has an allergy to latex will always be allergic to it.**

Some of the most common products made from latex are latex gloves and rubber balloons. A list of many other items made from latex is on pages 3 to 6.

### **Who Can Become Allergic to Latex?**

Anyone can become allergic to latex, but some people are at higher risk. These include:

- People with spina bifida or myelomeningocele
- Those who have other allergies (especially people who are allergic to avocados, bananas, kiwi, or water chestnuts).
- Those who have had frequent exposure to latex.
- Health care workers

The cause of a latex allergy is not known. Some experts believe latex allergies occur more often in patients with spina bifida because they have frequent contact with latex products. Children with spina bifida have many surgeries, diagnostic tests, and bowel and bladder programs that involve using latex products.

### **Signs of an Allergic Reaction**

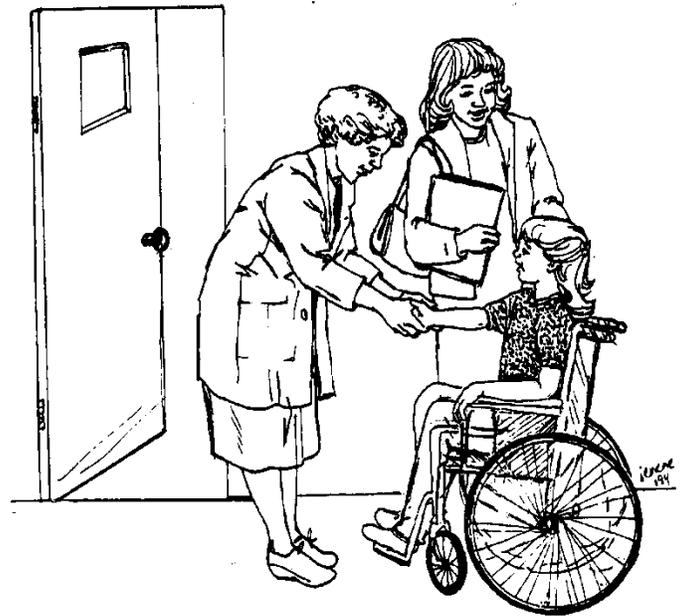
- Skin rash or scaliness
- Itching
- Hives
- Swelling
- Itchy, watery or puffy eyes
- Sneezing or coughing
- Wheezing
- Difficulty breathing
- Anxiety
- Rapid heartbeat (palpitations)

## Common Products that Contain Latex

- On pages 3 to 6 are products that contain latex and suggested substitutes. Be sure to read the labels.
- Ask the pharmacist or manufacturer to suggest substitutes if you do not see the product on the LATEX-SAFE list.

## Ways to Avoid an Allergic Reaction

- Avoid products that contain latex. Reducing your child's exposure to latex may help prevent an allergic reaction.
- Tell all of your child's care givers about his or her latex allergy risk (Picture 1). This includes hospitals, doctors, nurses, dentists, schools, day care workers, baby-sitters, and your local emergency services.



**Picture 1** Teachers and caregivers should be told if your child is allergic to latex.

## What to Do in an Emergency

1. Remove the object causing the allergic reaction as soon as possible.
2. If your child has a rash, itching or hives, call your doctor.
3. If your child has any wheezing or trouble breathing, call for emergency help right away. Call 9-1-1 or your local fire department.
4. If you have an EpiPen, use it as directed by your doctor or nurse.

## Other Tips and Advice

- Your child's doctor may suggest that you buy a Medic Alert ID bracelet or necklace for your child. Your local pharmacy can tell you where to get one.
- Ask your child's doctor or nurse if your child needs to carry an EpiPen (injectable emergency medicine). (See Helping Hand HH-V-122, *Epinephrine Autoinjector Pens*.)
- For more information on latex, refer to the Spina Bifida Association of America website at [www.spinabifidaassociation.org](http://www.spinabifidaassociation.org).
- Contact purchasing or materials management for questions on specific latex-containing items within Nationwide Children's Hospital.

If you have any questions, be sure to ask your doctor or nurse, or call \_\_\_\_\_.

This list provides a guide to some of the most common objects containing latex and offers some alternatives. It is not meant to be a comprehensive listing. **It is required by law that manufacturers must label any medical items that contain natural rubber latex.** ALWAYS CHECK THE PRODUCTS PACKAGING. If in doubt regarding the safety of an item, call the manufacturer.

| Frequently contains LATEX   | LATEX-Safe Alternatives  |
|---|--|
| Anesthesia: circuits, bags, oxygen masks  | Neoprene (Anesthesia Associates, Ohmeda adult), some Vital Signs   |
| Band-aids   | Active Strip (3M), CURAD Neon, Readi-Bandages, NHP, Coverlet, some Airstrip, Advanced Healing  |
| Blood pressure cuff and tubing (J&J)  | Cleen Cuff (Vital Signs), nylon, some Trimline   |
| Bulb syringe  | Some Davol, Medline, RÜSCH, Premium, Baxter  |
| Casts: Delta-Lite Podiatry, Orthoflex (J&J)   | Scotchcast soft, Delta-Lites, recent Conformable Caraglas Ultra (J&J), liners (Gore)   |
| Catheters: condom   | Clear Advantage, ProSys NL, selected Coloplast, Rochester, PolyTech (Hollister)  |
| Catheters: indwelling & systems, UDS  | Some Am BioMed, Argyle, Bard, Cook, Dale, Kendall, Lifetech, Mentor/Coloplast, Rochester, RÜSCH, Vitaid, Adapters & plug (Addto)   |
| Catheters: cardiac, vascular, pulmonary   | Some World Medical, Am BioMed  |
| Catheters: straight, coude, foley   | Selected RobNel (Sherwood), Coloplast, Bard, RUSCH, Hollister, AstraTech, or Rochester catheters<br>Be sure to check labeling on the box. Individual catheter packages are not always labeled.   |
| Catheters: feeding  | Accumark feeding catheter (Sims Portex)  |
| Dressings: Dyna-flex, butterfly closures (J&J), Tensoplast (formerly Elastoplast), Action Wrap, Lyofoam (Acme), Spandage (Medi-tech), Telfa | Duoderm, Reston foam (3M), Opsite, Venigard, Comfeel, Sorbaview, Telfa (some) Xeroform, PinCare, Bioclusive, Montgomery strap (J&J), Webnil, Metalline, Selopor, OpraFlex, Centurion brief, some Airstrips, Rainbow Net (Surgilast), VAC, Warm-up  |
| NOTE: latex in package only: Steri-strip wound closure system, Tegisorb, Active Strips (3M), Nu-Derm (J&J), CURAD                           |  |
| Ear Plugs   | Grainger (5F767)   |
| Elastic wrap: ACE, Esmarch, Zimmer Dyna-flex, Dyna-flex, Elastikon (J&J), Coban (3M)  | E-Cotton, CEB elastic (coNco), Champ (Carolon), Adban Adhesive, X-Mark (Avcor), Co-Flex (Tetra), PowerFlex (Andover), Comprilan (Jobst), Esmark (DeRoyal, NHP), 3M™ Coban™ LF Latex Free Self-Adherent Wrap, "CoFlex-AFD" and "Co-Flex NL" by Andover Healthcare                         |
| Electrode bulbs, pads, grounding  | Some Baxter, Dantec EMG, Conmed, ValleyLab, Vermont Med, Staodyn, Neotrode   |
| Endotracheal tubes, airways   | Selected Berman, Mallinckrodt, Polamedco, Portex, RÜSCH, Sheridan, Shiley  |
| Enemas  | BabyLax, Enemeez, Bowel Management Tube (MIC), Pharmaseal set, all Fleet Ready-to-Use, cone irrigation set (Convatec), silicone retention cuff tip (Lafayette), Coloplast Cone Tip enema set   |
| G-tubes, buttons  | Silicone (Bard, Flexiflo, MIC, RÜSCH, Stomate)   |
| Gloves: sterile, clean, surgical, orthodontic   | Allergard (J&J), dermaprene (Ansell), N-DEX (Best), Safeskin Nitrile, Neolon, SensiCare, Tru-touch (Maxxim), Nitrex, Tactyl 1,2 (SmartPractice), Duraprene, (Allegiance Healthcare), Elastyren (Hermal, Center Labs), Boston Medical, Masel, Neotech, Biogel Skin Sense (Regent Medical) |
| Incentive deep breathing exerciser  | Voldyne 5000 (Sherwood David & Geck), Triflo II  |
| IV access: injection ports, Y-sites, bags, pumps, buretrol ports, PRN adapters, needleless systems  | Polymer injection caps, burettes and Safsite (Braun), Abbot Systems, Walrus, Gemini (IMED), selected Baxter (InterLink), Statlock, Ready Med, ConMed, Clave, Alaris, Hudson, selected Sims, IV boards (Avcor), Terumo Pumps: Mach II, ADS 100, Clic-Open (vial top remover—Sepha Pharm)  |

| Frequently contains LATEX                           | LATEX-Safe Alternatives   |
|---|---|
| OR/Infection Control masks, hats, shoe covers       | Some by Kimberly Clark, TECNOL, OR and sterile packs (CML, DeRoyal) twill ties  |
| Ostomy supplies                                     | Check with individual companies regarding latex content of products   |
| Medication/Immunization vial stoppers               | Some AmRegent, Astra, Bedford Labs, Fujisawa, Gensia, Glaxo, Lilly, Roche. Check the CDC website for up to date information at <a href="http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/downloads/appendices/B/latex-table.pdf">www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/downloads/appendices/B/latex-table.pdf</a> |
| Miscellaneous items                                 | Soft-Grip fabric clamp covers (Scanlan), Precision Dynamics ID bracelets  |
| Penrose drains                                      | Jackson-Pratt, Zimmer Hemovac   |
| Pulse oximeters, thermometer probes                 | Nonin oximeters, selected Nellcor sensors, Diatec probe covers  |
| Reflex hammers                                      | Cover with plastic bag, Pedipals  |
| Respirators   | Advantage (MSA), HEPA-Tech (Uvex), PFR 95 (Tecnol), 3M 1860   |
| Resuscitators, manual                               | Certain Ambu, Armstrong, Laerdal, Puriton Bennett, Vital Blue, Respironics, RÜSCH   |
| Skin Adhesives                                      | Mastisol (Ferndale)   |
| Spacer (for metered dose inhalers)                  | ACE spacer (Center Labs), OptiHaler (HealthScan)  |
| Stethoscope tubing                                  | PVC (some Littman) cover with ScopeCoat or latex-free stockinette (Albahealth)  |
| Suction tubing                                      | PVC (Davol, Laerdal, Mallinckrodt, Superior, Yankauer) Medline, Ballard   |
| Syringes, disposable                                | Terumo Medical, Abbott PCA Abboject, Norm-Ject (Air-Tite), EpiPen, selected BD syringes, AdvantaJet (Activa)  |
| Tapes: pink, Waterproof (3M), Zonas, Moleskin cloth | Dermicel (J&J), Durapore, Microfoam, Micropore, Transpore (3M) Cath-Strip Molepad, Hytape Pink, STATtape  |
| Waterproof (J&J), adhesive felt (Acme)              | (Genetic Labs), Ice Tape (P.O.Pak), All-Felt (Universal Foot Care), Hypafix   |
| Tonopen disposable covers (glaucoma tester)         | None  |
| Tourniquets   | Children's Medical, Grafco, VelcroPedic, X-Tourn straps (Avcor), Free-Band (Kent)   |
| Theraband (also strip, tube), other OT supplies     | REP Bands and Cords (OPTP), Exercise putty (Rolyan), new Thera-Band Exercisers  |
| Tubing, sheeting                                    | Plastic tubing—Tygon LR-40 (Norton), elastic thread, sheets (JPS Elastomerics)  |
| Vascular/Compression stockings                      | Compriform Custom (Jobst), Latex Free TEDs, some varieties of Sigvaris  |

This list provides a guide to some of the most common objects containing latex and offers some alternatives. It is not meant to be a comprehensive listing. **Manufacturers are not required to label home and community products which contain natural rubber.** ALWAYS CHECK THE PRODUCTS PACKAGING. If in doubt regarding the safety of an item, call the manufacturer.

| Frequently contains LATEX   | LATEX-Safe Alternatives  |
|---|--|
| School/Office/Art supplies: paints, glue, erasers, fabric paints, grips for writing utensils, duct tape | Elmers (School Glue, Glue-All, GluColors, Carpenters Wood Glue, Sno-Drift paste) FaberCastel erasers, Crayola (except stamps, erasers), Liquitex paints, DickBlick tempera, acrylic paints and soap erasers, Play-Doh, Pro-Craft, Clic Eraser, Pentel erasers, pens, and pencils, 3M Post-it Notes, Staedtler Mars Plastic Eraser, masking tape, STATape, Dixon/Ticonderoga Company (Erasers, Wooden Pencils and Art Supplies) |
| Balloons  | Mylar balloons, Mister Balloon, plastic balloons   |
| Balls: Koosh balls, tennis balls, bowling balls, ball pits  | PVC (Hedstrom Sports Ball), Nerf Foam Balls, Gertie Balls, Googlie Imperial Toys, AMF Bowling balls  |
| Carpet backing, gym floor, gym mats   | Broadloom carpets contain no NRL. For other products, provide barrier cloth or mat.  |
| Chewing gum   | Bubblicious, Trident (Warner-Lambert), Wrigley gums (check new products), Bazooka gum, Bubble Yum, Ice Breakers gum  |
| Clothes: liquid appliques on tee-shirts, elastic on socks, underwear, sneakers, sandals                 | Cloth-covered elastic, neoprene (Decent Exposures, NOLATEX Industries), Buster Brown elastic-free socks (Vermont Country Store)  |
| Condoms, contraceptive sponges, diaphragm   | Polyurethane (Avanti), female condom (Reality), Wideseal Silicone Diaphragms (Millex), Trojan Supra Condom, FemCaps  |
| Costumes: masks, face paint, nail polish, etc.  | Check all products   |
| CPR manikins and medical training aids  | Most Laerdal products  |
| Crutches: tips, axillary pads, hand grips   | Cover with cloth or tape   |
| Dental dams, cups, bands, root canal material, orthodontic rubber bands                                 | PURO/M27 intraoral elastics (Midwest Orthodontic), wire springs, sealant (Delton) dams (Meer Dental, Hygenic Corp), John O Butler, Earloop masks (Richmond)  |
| Diapers, incontinence pads, rubber pants  | Huggies, First Quality, Gold Seal, Tranquility, Always, Attends, Drypers Diapers (not training pants), Confidence (Paper-Pak), Pampers, Luvs, Seventh Generation Diapers   |
| Feeding nipples   | Silicone, vinyl (selected Gerber, Evenflo, MAM, Ross, Mead Johnson)  |
| Food handled with latex gloves  | Synthetic gloves for food handling   |
| Handles on racquets, tools, bicycles  | Vinyl, leather handles or cover with cloth or tape   |
| Kitchen cleaning gloves   | PVC MYPLEX (Magla), cotton liners (Allerderm)  |
| Mattress / pressure relief  | Check each one for latex content   |
| Miscellaneous items   | Some medical stickers by MediBadge, UAL, Cushie Tushie Potty Seat, Bumbo Seat, Water Pik shower head and hose  |
| Newsprint, ads, coupons, lottery scratch tickets  | None   |
| Pacifiers   | Soothies (Children's Med Ventures), selected Binky, Gerber, Infa, Kip, MAM   |
| Paints, sealants, stains, etc.  | There is NO NATURAL RUBBER in latex paint, though it may be present in some waterproof paints and sealants   |
| Playpits, playground surfaces   | Natural rubber latex may be a component of surfaces, Boundless Playgrounds   |
| Rubber bands, bungee cords  | Plasti bands   |
| Toothbrushes / infant massager  | Soft bristle brush or cloth, Gerber/NUK, all Oral B products   |
| Toys: Stretch Armstrong, old Barbies  | Jurassic Park figures (Kenner), 1993 Barbie, Disney dolls (Mattel), many toys by Fisher Price, Little Tikes, Playschool, Discovery, Trolls (Norfin), Silly-putty   |

| Frequently contains LATEX   | LATEX-Safe Alternatives  |
|---|--|
| Water toys and equipment: beach thongs, masks, bathing suits, caps, scuba gear, goggles | PVC, plastic, nylon, Suits Me Swimwear                           |
| Wheelchair cushions   | Jay, ROHO cushions, Sof Care bed/chair cushions (Gaymar)         |
| Wheelchair tires  | Recommend using leather gloves                                   |
| Zippered plastic storage bags   | Waxed paper, plain plastic bags, Ziploc bags, Glad Press N' Seal |

### Associated Allergies

Foods include: banana, avocado, chestnut, kiwi, pear. Plants include: Poinsettia and milk weed pods.

### About These Lists

These lists are offered by the Latex Committee of the Nursing and Healthcare Professionals Council of the Spina Bifida Association as a guideline to individuals, families, and professionals. It is updated annually.

The information contained in these lists is constantly changing as manufacturers improve their products and as we learn more about latex allergy.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The latex content of products may vary between companies and product series. Companies that offer "alternatives" may ALSO make many LATEX products. We recommend that you check with suppliers before exposing individuals with latex allergies to the product.

**REMEMBER:** Always check the label—even if the product is on this list. If a product has recently replaced latex, many institutions will continue to use the old stock before they replace it with the new.

### For More Information

For the most current version of this list, visit the SBA Web site at [www.spinabifidaassociation.org](http://www.spinabifidaassociation.org).

#### Online Resources

*Spina Bifida Association*  
[www.spinabifidaassociation.org](http://www.spinabifidaassociation.org)

*American Latex Allergy Association/ALERT*  
[www.latexallergyresources.org](http://www.latexallergyresources.org)  
*Type I Versus Type IV Allergic Reactions: How do they Differ?*  
[www.latexallergyresources.org/Newsletter/newsletterArticle.cfm?NewsletterID=16](http://www.latexallergyresources.org/Newsletter/newsletterArticle.cfm?NewsletterID=16)

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—latex in vaccine packaging*  
[www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/downloads/appendices/B/latex-table.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/downloads/appendices/B/latex-table.pdf)

*Decent Exposures*  
(latex free undergarments)  
1-800-524-4949  
[www.decentexposures.com](http://www.decentexposures.com)

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

*American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology*  
[www.acaai.org](http://www.acaai.org)

*Center for Disease Control Latex in Vaccine Packaging*  
[www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/downloads/appendices/B/latex-table.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/downloads/appendices/B/latex-table.pdf)