

## **LATEX ALLERGY POLICY**

*Approved by Administrative Council 11/13/12*

*Effective date 11/13/12*

Purpose: Provide an understanding of the potential risks associated with the exposure to latex in the environment for students, employees and visitors. A totally latex-free environment is not possible in either clinical or academic settings.

What is Latex? Latex refers to natural rubber latex and includes products made from dry natural rubber. Natural rubber latex is the product manufactured from a milky fluid derived mainly from a rubber tree.

The most common source of a latex allergen is latex gloves. Other products that contain latex include, but are not limited to:

Blood pressure cuffs, stethoscopes, disposable gloves, oral and nasal airways, endotracheal tubes, tourniquets, intravenous tubing, syringes, electrode pads, surgical masks, goggles, respirators, anesthesia masks, catheters, wound drains, injection ports, tops of multidose vials, dental dams, rubber aprons, rubber bands, rubber erasers, and balloons.

Individuals can be exposed to latex residue, of others working in an area, or to latex present in the equipment, models and mannequins that are used in various practice laboratories.

Latex allergy should be suspected in anyone who develops certain symptoms after latex exposure, including nasal, eye, or sinus irritation; hives; difficulty breathing, shortness of breath; coughing; wheezing; or unexplained shock. Students, employees, and

The responsibility of understanding the risks associated with latex exposure, even when reasonable precautions have been made rests with the employee, student, or visitor who has a latex sensitivity. These individuals may consider wearing a medi

- Educate students and faculty with latex sensitivities to select latex-free gloves during clinical experiences.

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