

Tempe Fire Department Policies and Procedures
Emergency Medical Services
Latex Allergy and Latex Free Kit
210.13
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PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to outline the procedure for the management of patients or TFD members with a suspected latex sensitivity or allergy. These guidelines will help to minimize the risk of latex associated complications in any individual with a latex sensitivity or allergy.

Introduction

The Medical Community recognizes that latex allergy or hypersensitivity has become an important health issue for infants, adults, their caregivers, and an occupational risk for healthcare workers. It is estimated that between 3% - 6% of the general population is negatively affected in some way by latex products. Latex products are manufactured from the sap of the rubber tree. Several chemicals are added to the sap during the manufacturing of commercial latex. Allergic reactions to various proteins in latex can range from watery/itchy eyes to sneezing/coughing and urticaria (hives). Exposure to latex products in some individuals can result in anaphylactic shock and possibly even cardiac arrest.

Risk groups for these allergic reactions include persons with conditions such as spina bifida or urogenital abnormalities and sensitized employees working in environments with exposure to latex products. Research studies have shown that between 18% and 73% of individuals with spina bifida are sensitive to latex. Studies also show that between 8% -12% of regularly exposed healthcare workers have become sensitized to latex.

Although the cause of latex allergy is not known, it is theorized that sensitization may occur from exposure early in one's life or career to intense and/or constant exposure to latex products through multiple procedures and surgeries. The risk for developing latex sensitivity/allergy appears to be related to the amount of use over time. Exposures occur when products containing latex come in contact with a person's skin or mucus membranes. Serious reactions can occur when latex enters the bloodstream. In addition, the powder from gloves can absorb latex particles and become airborne causing reactions when inhaled by individuals allergic to latex. Food that has been in contact with latex gloves may also precipitate a reaction, as may pacifiers that contain latex. People who have allergic reactions to latex may also be allergic to certain foods.

GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING PATIENTS WITH LATEX ALLERGIES

1. Identify the possibility of a latex allergy through assessment, medical history, and/or Medic Alert bracelet.
2. Flag the patient's encounter form with the words "LATEX ALLERGY" clearly visible. Include latex on the allergy section of the encounter form report.
3. ~~Place latex allergy wristband from latex free kit on the patient.~~
4. Utilize latex-free supplies for all patient contact, intervention, and care (Purple Colored Bag on all TFD Apparatus medical patient care equipment is latex free).
5. ~~Do NOT use equipment or items that contain latex (see list).~~
6. ~~Cover the patient's upper arm with gauze/kling prior to placing BP cuff on patient. Wrap BP cuff tubing and Stethoscope tubing to avoid contact with patient. The MULTIKUF BP set is latex free.~~
7. ~~Do not use a latex tourniquet when starting an IV. Use BP cuff as described or tourniquet from latex free IV start kit.~~
8. ~~Medication containers with latex tops should be accessed by removing the top with a bottle opener (provided in kit). Do not puncture the stopper to withdraw medication.~~
9. ~~Do not inject medications through latex IV tubing injection ports. Place latex free tape over injection ports to ensure they will not be used.~~
10. ~~Flush IV tubing with 50 cc's fluid to ensure removal of contaminants.~~
11. Communicate presence of latex allergy to receiving facility healthcare providers upon transfer of care.
12. Protect patient from monitoring lead wires.
13. ~~The Pulse Oximeter/CO2 probes are latex free.~~

GUIDELINES FOR FIRE DEPARTMENT MEMBERS WITH LATEX ALLERGY

1. Notify immediate supervisor and Infection Control Officer immediately if you suspect you may have a latex sensitivity or allergy.
2. Complete the two Department exposure forms, as well as fill out an industrial report.
3. The Department will make reasonable environmental accommodations to reduce the employee's risk of exposure to latex products (all TFD Apparatus medical patient care equipment is latex free).
4. ~~It is the responsibility of every TFD member with Latex sensitivity to maintain/carry an adequate supply of latex free gloves as part of his/her Personal Protective Equipment. Latex free gloves are available and may be requested from the Warehouse for personal use.~~

COMMON PRODUCTS CONTAINING LATEX

EMS Supplies

- ~~Tubing on blood pressure cuffs~~
- ~~Stethoscopes~~
- ~~Disposable gloves~~
- ~~Oral and nasal airways~~
- ~~Tops of multi-dose vials~~
- ~~Tourniquets~~
- ~~IV tubing/drug ports~~
- ~~Syringes~~
- ~~EKG leads~~
- ~~Endotracheal tubes~~
- ~~Band-Aids~~
- ~~Thermometer probes~~
- ~~Tape~~
- ~~Suction tubing~~
- ~~Masks~~
- ~~Goggles~~
- ~~Respirators~~

Tempe Fire Department Latex Free Kit Contents

TEMPE FIRE DEPARTMENT Latex-Free Kit

Item #	Item	Quantity
1	Latex Free Exam gloves	6 pr
2	Latex Allergy ID bracelet	2
3	Adult NRB oxygen mask	1
4	Neonate Ambu mask	1
5	Infant Ambu bag mask	1
6	Peds/Toddler Ambu bag mask	1
7	Adult Ambu Bag	1
8	3.5 ET Tube with stylet	1
9	5.5 ET Tube with stylet	1
10	7.5 ET Tube with stylet	1
11	Oral Airways (OPA)	1 set
12	Blue Sensor EKG Electrodes	2
13	IV Start Kit	2
14	10 gtt. IV Blood Tubing	1
15	1000cc 0.9% Normal Saline	1
16	16 gauge Jelco IV catheter	1
17	18 gauge Jelco IV catheter	1
18	20 gauge Jelco IV catheter	1
19	1 cc 25G TB syringe with needle	1
20	19G x 1½" needles	2

21	19G x 1½" needle Monoject filter needles	2
22	3cc syringe and 23Gx1" needle	2
23	5cc syringe	1
24	10cc syringe	1
25	Large trauma dressing/pad	1
26	Abdominal Pad	1
27	Soft kling rolls/bandages	3
28	Adhesive Band Aids ¾" x 3 in	10
29	Roll 3" tape	1
30	Stainless steel bottle opener (non-disposable)	1

Procedure for storage and supply replacement for Latex Free Kits

The latex free kit should be kept in a "sealed" ready state on each apparatus for use when a patient is encountered with a known or possible latex allergy. The kit should be opened and the appropriate equipment utilized as necessary for patient management.

The latex free kit should be stored with security seals in place to ensure that all supplies will be present and latex free when needed. **Under no circumstances should a field crew restock their own latex free kit after use.** Extreme care has been taken to ensure that all items carried in the latex free kit are in fact latex free. Much of the similar EMS supplies stored in our station EMS supply cabinets are not latex free. Whenever a latex free kit is opened and supplies used the crew must immediately contact the EMS Captain or BC for restock. A complete replacement kit will be sent to the affected company or the appropriate supplies will be hand delivered and the added to the kit. The bag will then be resealed and placed back in service in a "ready state".

A card containing a list of the kit contents will be attached to the outside of the bag for reference. Do not open the kit for a daily check. As long as the security seals are in place the kit should be considered complete. If the security seals are missing, contact the EMS section.

STANDARD

NIOSH Alert: Preventing Allergic Reactions to Natural Rubber Latex in the Workplace, 1997. National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Publication No. 97-135.