

Latex Allergy

**** It is Important to know if a child in your classroom has a latex allergy. The first step in preventing latex allergy attacks or in treating latex allergy is being aware of the problem.**

What is a latex allergy?

Some children have an allergy or sensitivity to latex (rubber). Reaction can be seen when products made from latex come in contact with the child's skins, mucous membranes in the mouth, etc. Some children may react when blowing up a rubber balloon or breathing in powder from the inside of latex gloves.

What are the symptoms of a latex allergy?

- Watery or itchy eyes
- Wheezing
- Hives
- Flushing of the skin or a skin rash
- Itching of the skin
- Swelling of the skin

In some cases, severe reactions (Anaphylactic shock) can occur in which the child may have problems breathing, experience chest tightness, or has swelling of his/her throat or tongue. Severe reactions require emergency treatment.

What needs to be avoided if a child is allergic to latex?

- Balloons
- Koosh balls, rubber balls
- Rubber stamps
- Rubber toys
- Pens with comfort grip or any rubber coating
- Camera, telescope, or binocular eye pieces
- Dental products (such as mouth guards)
- Beach toys, art supplies made with rubber
- Rubber bands, band-aids, erasers, hand grips on racquets and bicycles
- Wheelchair tires
- Sport shoes and rubber clothing (such as raincoats)
- Surgical gloves
- Any item that is light brown and can be stretched may contain latex.

There are items that can be used in place of the items that contain latex. They are made from vinyl, plastic, or silicone.

- ✓ **FYI:** Latex allergies may also cross over into food groups. If you are already allergic to certain foods, you may be at high risk for developing a latex allergy. The following foods can trigger a latex-like allergic reaction because the proteins in them mimic latex proteins as they break down in the body.

Banana	Avocado	Fig	Kiwi	Nectarine
Melon	Cherry	Plum	Peach	Strawberry
Papaya	Tomato	Chestnut	Celery	Pineapple

Source: Children's Hospital of Wisconsin – <http://www.chw.org/display/PPF/DocID/21568/router.asp>

Additional Resource: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/latex-allergy/DS00621>