

Latex Allergy in Practice Setting

Purpose: To educate individual(s) and/or community about issues related to latex allergies and items of potential exposure i.e. exam gloves, dental dams, stethoscopes, syringe stoppers, etc.

Population: All town residents and occupants (e.g. workers, school pupils, prison inmates) as determined.

Legal Considerations:

1. Federal/State Law or Local Reg.? (N)
2. Physicians order(s)? (N)
3. Informed consent ? (N)

Materials:

Educational materials on latex allergies and relevant equipment

Planning:

1. Identify target populations
2. Conduct educational needs assessment
3. Design and/or obtain presentation and educational materials
4. Schedule presentations
5. Prepare evaluation tool

Financial Considerations:

1. Cost of educational materials and equipment
2. Cost of marketing and media campaign
3. Cost of replacing equipment containing latex
4. Cost of emergency supplies that can include but are not limited to: EPI-Pens, antihistamines

Procedure:

1. Inventory the site for latex containing products.
2. Provide information about latex allergy symptoms: i.e.: skin rash, itch, hives, itchy eyes, nasal stuffiness, sneezing, coughing, wheezing, asthma, chemical sensitivity, IgE antibody reaction, collapse, shock, and anaphylaxis.
3. Provide information about possible cross sensitivities to bananas, kiwi fruit, and pineapple.
4. Refer people reporting symptoms as described above to their medical home or primary health care facility promptly.
5. Provide information on the use of medic-alert bracelets for people reporting severe allergic reaction.
6. Post "THIS IS NOT A LATEX FREE CLINIC" sign at all clinics.

Nursing Considerations:

Follow up with person reporting symptoms per nursing protocol.

Documentation/Record keeping:

1. Documentation on educational activities is to be maintained per nursing protocol.
2. Documentation on referrals to medical home or primary care provider is to be maintained per nursing protocol.

Evaluation:

1. Provide formal evaluation forms to each attendant for each educational activity.
2. Samples of evaluation forms are available in the appendix.

Health Promotion/Disease Prevention Intervention(s):

1. Develop presentations/workshops for identified latex glove users i.e. health care, restaurant, school cafeteria, daycare providers etc.
2. Provide resource materials and information on latex allergy.
3. Ensure that latex information is included in allergy protocols in schools and worksites.

References:

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). (June 1997).
Preventing allergic reactions to natural rubber latex in the workplace.

Resources:

Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Occupational Health Surveillance Program: 617-624-5632 or <http://www.state.ma.us/dph/ohsp/ohsp.htm>
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH),
www.cdc.gov/niosh/homepage