

TITLE: LATEX ALLERGIC PATIENTS**POLICY STATEMENT:**

The following procedure has been established to assure proper care of the patient who has a suspected or known latex allergy.

LATEX ALLERGY: recognized as a significant problem for specific patients and healthcare workers – recognized as two types:

TYPE 1 (systemic): immediate reaction (within 15 minutes) – symptoms include: generalized rash, wheezing, dyspnea, laryngeal edema, bronchospasm, tachycardia, angioedema, hypotension and cardiac arrest.

TYPE 2 (delayed): Delayed reactions (6-48 hours) – symptoms include: contact dermatitis such as local itching, edema, erythema (redness), blisters (vesicles), drying patches, crushing and thickening of the skin and dermatitis that spreads beyond the skin initially exposed to the latex.

Those persons at risk include patients with spina bifida, patients with urogenital abnormalities, workers with industrial exposures to latex, healthcare workers, persons with multiple surgeries, persons with frequent urinary procedures and persons with a history of predisposition to allergies.

GOAL/PURPOSE:

To establish guidelines for the management of patients with suspected or known latex sensitivity.

POLICY/PROCEDURE:**A. Suspected Latex Allergy:**

1. Assess for suspected latex sensitivity screen by asking the following: "Do you react to rubber bands? Describe. "Do you react to balloons? Describe."
2. Initiate interventions for "known latex sensitivity" if latex sensitivity screen response suggests suspected latex hypersensitivity.
3. Notify Medical Control of suspected latex hypersensitivity. Receive orders as appropriate for System Allergic Reaction Protocol.

B. Known Latex Sensitivity:

1. Obtain history and ask patient to describe symptoms of latex sensitivity.
2. Monitor the following signs and symptoms:

| | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| itching eyes | generalized itching |
| feeling of faintness | tachycardia |
| hypotension | wheezing |
| bronchospasm | feeling of impending doom |
| nausea | vomiting |
| abdominal cramping | flushing |
| facial edema | urticaria |
| shortness of breath | |

C. INTERVENTIONS for Known Latex Sensitivity:

1. Modify ambulance environment of latex containing substances. Remove all loose latex items (box of gloves, tourniquets, etc.) and place in a closed compartment or exterior storage panel.
2. Utilize available latex-free supplies when preparing to care for or transport the latex sensitive patient. The latex-free supplies must be available on the ambulance or vehicle and readily available.
3. Cover mattress of cot with a sheet so that no areas of the mattress are exposed.
4. DO NOT administer any medications through any latex port on the IV tubing.
5. Wrap all tubing containing latex in kling or stockinette before coming in contact with the patient (stethoscope tubing, BP cuff tubing).

D. DOCUMENTATION should include:

1. Notification of Medical Control of suspected latex allergy or know latex allergy and any other received
2. Notification of receiving nurse on arrival of suspected latex allergy or known latex allergy
3. Any interventions done to protect patient from latex exposure
4. Any abnormal findings or signs and symptoms related to latex exposure

Adopted from Region 2 *Latex Allergic Patients* Policy 12/00

EMS Medical Director

EMS System Coordinator