

**LATEX GLOVE USE
(REGULATION)
Symptoms of Latex Allergy**

LATEX GLOVE USE

Latex allergies can produce a variety of symptoms, including skin redness, hives, itching, runny nose, sneezing, itchy eyes, scratchy throat, and asthma. While many cases are mild, in severe cases, exposure to latex may result in anaphylactic shock, life-threatening condition. Symptoms may occur within minutes of exposure to latex or, in the case of allergic skin reactions take up to two days to become evident.

Occurrence of Latex Allergies

Food service employees who repeatedly use latex gloves may be at risk of developing sensitivity to latex, which could result in their becoming allergic to a wide range of latex containing products. There is a concern that if food service employees continue to use latex gloves, a significant percentage may develop allergies to latex.

Consumers who are sensitized to latex can be at risk if they consume food that has been handled by workers wearing latex gloves. The allergens from the gloves can be transferred to the food and may cause a reaction in allergic individuals.

Although reactions appear to be rare, sensitized people may be at risk of experiencing an allergic reaction should they eat food that has been handled with latex gloves.

Recommendations

Employees in school cafeterias should avoid the use of latex gloves. Good substitutes for latex gloves are available and include vinyl, nitrile, polyvinyl, chloroprene, or polyethylene gloves, and deli tissues and tongs. As always, good hand washing practices are critical in food service operations.

District employees, patrons, and students who have a sensitivity to latex or who have latex allergies should advise appropriate school employees.