

Methodist Health Services Corporation UnityPoint Health- Proctor	Page # 1 of 2	Section:	Policy #: 15
	Approved by:		Date: 6/2017 Review by: 6/2018
	Supersedes: Date Revised: 6/2017		
	Primary Responsible Parties: Dr. Ashley N. Huff Secondary Responsible Parties:		
	Joint Commission Standard:		
SUBJECT: LATEX ALLERGY			

I. POLICY:  
Latex Allergy

II. PURPOSE AND STANDARD:

A latex allergy is recognized as a significant problem for specific patients and healthcare workers. There are two (2) types:

- **Systemic** – Immediate reaction (within 15 minutes). Symptoms include generalized rash, wheezing, dyspnea, laryngeal edema, bronchospasm, tachycardia, angioedema, hypotension and cardiac arrest.
- **Delayed** – Delayed reaction (6 to 48 hours). Symptoms include contact dermatitis such as local itching, edema, erythema (redness), blisters, drying patches, crushing & thickening of the skin, and dermatitis that spreads beyond the skin initially exposed to the latex.

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.

III. POLICY SCOPE: Departmental

IV. GENERAL INFORMATION:

A. Suspected Latex Allergy

1. Assess for suspected latex sensitivity by asking the following:  
“Do you react to rubber bands or balloons? Describe.”
2. Initiate interventions for *Known Latex Sensitivity* if the latex sensitivity screen response suggests a latex hypersensitivity.
3. Notify the receiving hospital of suspected latex hypersensitivity.
4. Follow orders as per the *Allergic/Anaphylactic Reaction SMO*.

## B. Known Latex Allergy

1. Obtain a patient history and ask the patient to describe their symptoms of latex hypersensitivity.
2. Monitor the following signs and symptoms:
  - a. Itching eyes
  - b. Feeling of faintness
  - c. Hypotension
  - d. Bronchospasm/Wheezing
  - e. Nausea/Vomiting
  - f. Abdominal cramping
  - g. Facial edema
  - h. Flushing
  - i. Urticaria
  - j. Shortness of breath
  - k. Generalized itching
  - l. Tachycardia
  - m. Feeling of impending doom
3. Notify the receiving hospital of known latex sensitivity.
4. Follow orders as per the *Allergic/Anaphylactic Reaction Protocol*.
5. Remove all loose latex items (*e.g.* gloves, tourniquets, etc.) and place in a closed compartment or exterior storage panel.
6. Utilize available latex-free supplies when preparing to care for or transport the latex-sensitive patient. The latex-free supplies must be on the ambulance (or other apparatus) and readily available.
7. Cover the mattress of the cot with a sheet so that no areas of the mattress are exposed.
8. DO NOT administer any medications through latex IV ports.
9. Wrap all tubing containing latex before coming into contact with the patient (*e.g.* stethoscope tubing, BP cuff tubing, etc.).