

Latex Sensitivity

504.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures to ensure that all [District](#) members are aware of the potential for severe allergic reactions caused by contact with products containing latex and how to mitigate patient exposure.

504.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Latex sensitivity - Allergic reactions after exposure to products containing latex/natural rubber (e.g., balloons, rubber gloves, other consumable medical products or medical devices).

504.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Fresno County Fire Protection District that members shall take precautions to minimize latex exposure any time a patient is exhibiting signs of allergy or anaphylaxis, or any time members are advised that a patient is known to have a latex sensitivity. Every reasonable precaution shall be taken to prevent a latex sensitivity reaction in a patient.

504.3 PROCEDURE

If treating members are aware that a patient has a history of latex sensitivity, efforts to minimize exposure should be initiated. If a patient begins exhibiting signs of latex sensitivity or anaphylaxis, members should initiate treatment and continue to make reasonable efforts to minimize exposure to latex products.

If time permits before the loading the patient into the ambulance, the interior surfaces should be wiped down with a wet towel to reduce the presence of powder that contains latex proteins. All members wearing latex gloves should cover them with a pair of non-latex gloves. Latex gloves should not be removed as this can put dust or powder in the ambient environment for up to five hours. Members should provide a barrier between equipment and the patient by covering all latex-containing medical devices with stockinet or plastic wrap.

All nonessential equipment should be stored in closed compartments. Care should be taken to remove or replace latex-containing caps from medication vials and to keep intravenous (IV) ports covered to prevent injections. Latex dressings and IV tourniquets should not be used.

Treating members should notify the paramedic receiving center that a latex-sensitive patient is en route to the facility, and should document the patient's sensitivity and patient management (e.g., nitrile gloves, plastic wrap on blood pressure cuff) on the Pre-Hospital Care Report as appropriate. This information should also be communicated to the hospital staff immediately upon arrival.

Field units should carry the following latex-free equipment:

- Nitrile exam gloves

Latex Sensitivity

- Airway equipment (bag valve masks, oxygen masks, nasal cannulas, oral airways and suction catheters)
- Plastic or soft cloth tape
- Stockinet or plastic wrap to use as a barrier on medical equipment (e.g., blood pressure cuff, splints and stethoscopes)

Care should be taken to avoid storing uncovered latex gloves with other medical and/or airway equipment.