# Policy for the Use of Latex Products

To protect both patients and staff, *[Name]* Dental Practice has conducted a COSHH assessment for natural rubber latex (NRL) and has put in place procedures to reduce the likelihood of NRL allergies amongst staff and patients. Procedures have also been put in place for the management of both staff and patients with NRL allergies.

*[Name]* is responsible for assessing the risk that natural rubber latex poses to staff and patients and for completing the natural rubber latex COSHH form. Members of staff who are sensitive to natural rubber latex or with any other types of allergies report this to *[Name]*.

Any concerns or uncertainty about the management of latex allergy, whether patients or staff members, are reported to *[Name]*.

## Prevention of allergies among the dental team

Good-quality, powder-free, low-protein latex gloves are provided for all procedures involving contact with body fluids (i.e. saliva and blood).

Advice is provided on good skincare *[e.g. see hand hygiene procedures in hand hygiene policy]* and appropriate handcare products are provided.

## Protection for Sensitised Staff

If a staff member becomes sensitised, non-latex gloves (nitriles) are available. The need for other environmental changes will also be assessed.

Referral to Occupational Health Services can be arranged for sensitised individuals.

## Management of Patients with Allergies

Each patient’s medical history is checked for latex allergy.

If there is a suspicion of latex allergy, further information and investigation might be required before the patient is treated. Referral to the patient’s GMP might be advised. Latex-free products will be used if essential emergency treatment is required pending test results.

If there is a positive diagnosis by a RAST test or if there is a history of anaphylaxis to latex exposure, patients will be referred to a latex-free centre.

If the reaction is mild, and not a result of a proven allergy following investigation, latex-free products will be used during treatment.

## General Contacts

Health and Safety Executive

0845 345 0055

[www.hse.gov.uk/skin/employ/latex.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/skin/employ/latex.htm)

Anaphylaxis Campaign (incorporating the Latex Allergy Support Group)

01252 546100

<https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/living-with-anaphylaxis/living-with-natural-rubber-nrl-allergy/>

Forum: <http://www.lasg-forum.co.uk/post/YaBB.pl>

NHS Improvement – Patient Safety

020 37470900

## <https://improvement.nhs.uk/improvement-hub/patient-safety/>

enquiries@improvement.nhs.uk

## Local Contacts

*[Include details of local Health Board contacts where appropriate]*

Policy last updated: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date of next review: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*[Name and/or designation of responsible person]* Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The following staff have read and understood this policy *[include all team members]*.

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| **Dental Team Member** | **Position** | **Signature** | **Date** |
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