

Control Your Risk Of Healthcare Complications

(NAPSA)—The saying “what you don’t know won’t hurt you” could never be further from the truth when your health is at risk. Something as fundamental as the medical gloves used by your doctor could affect the outcome of your next surgical procedure. For that reason, take a closer look at a commonly used material in medical gloves, natural rubber latex (NRL).

NRL is one of the most useful and versatile substances known to man. A vital component of everyday products from balloons to rubber bands, its durability, flexibility and barrier properties have made it the preferred material for medical gloves. Yet a tight-fitting rubber latex glove can be a challenge to put on or take off, particularly with damp hands, a process known to healthcare workers as the “donning” of gloves. To aid in this process, powder coatings, such as talc and cornstarch, serve to lubricate gloves, but these substances potentially can cause complications during surgical procedures.

Powder on surgical gloves is a concern for two main reasons: how powder acts in contact with NRL proteins and what powder can do in a wound. Starch powder can bond to latex particles and adsorb latex allergens. In turn, when starch powder particles “puff” into the air, they may expose latex-allergic individuals through inhalation.

“Airborne latex particles would put our employees and patients who are latex-allergic at an increased risk with powdered latex gloves. Additionally, powder can contribute to irritant hand dermatitis and occupational asthma, and it can cause errors in some laboratory tests,” commented Dr. Wendy Huber, M.D., of Kaiser Permanente of California.

Powder-free latex gloves pro-



Being proactive about the care you receive today may prevent complications tomorrow.

vide all the benefits to the patient, such as a proven barrier protection to viruses and other pathogens, without compromising glove-donning for healthcare professionals. A popular powder-free alternative choice is Biogel®—a proprietary powder-free coating agent for gloves used by leading hospitals worldwide. Prestigious medical organizations, such as the American College of Surgeons (ACS) and the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA), support the use of powder-free medical gloves for patient and staff safety.

Despite the benefits of wearing powder-free gloves, seven out of 10 latex surgical gloves are still powdered. It is therefore incumbent upon the patient to ask that medical staff wear powder-free gloves when examining you and especially during your surgical procedures.

To help protect yourself from powder-related complications during your next surgical procedure, call Regent Medical at 888-566-3662, ext. 2270 to request a free informational brochure on medical gloves and your health. For additional resources, visit <http://info.powderfree.org>.