

Response to the publication, by NHSPlus leaflet, of the Royal College of Physicians' guidance, 'Latex allergy: occupational aspects of management'

"Your summary of the management of latex sensitivity in the health service (<http://www.nhsplus.nhs.uk/web/public/default.aspx?PageID=478>) does not, I fear, take us very far forward. Most of the health service (certainly in Scotland) stopped using powdered gloves about 10 years ago so this recommendation is hardly up to date. Indeed it is now very difficult to obtain powdered gloves of the sort used in the health service. Since latex-free non-sterile gloves are now as cheap and as good as latex ones (we stopped using latex versions about five years ago) how is the advice you give consistent with the COSHH regulations? Even for sterile surgeons' gloves, non-latex is acceptable in almost all circumstances. Again, your advice seems to be a step backwards and inconsistent with the COSHH regulations. Two of the bullet points seem practically identical; I wonder if it has been thoroughly proof read before publication. I wonder also what can be the evidence for the statements made in these points: such evidence would be very difficult to gather with any confidence."

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