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Latex Allergy

Patient name: _____ Admission: _____

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I. The client/caregiver can define latex allergy.

- A. Latex sensitivity is an allergic response to the protein in latex.
- B. Latex gloves are often coated with powder that gives the latex particles the ability to become airborne.
- C. Latex allergy symptoms can range from mild to severe.

II. The client/caregiver can define the two types of allergic reaction to latex.

- A. Contact dermatitis is usually a delayed localized skin reaction that occurs within 6 to 8 hours of contact and can last several days. The most common place of reaction is the hands.
- B. Immediate hypersensitivity is an instant system reaction of swelling, itching, respiratory distress, hypotension, and even death.
- C. General symptoms of latex allergy can be as follows:
 - Itchy, red, or watery eyes
 - Sneezing or runny nose
 - Coughing
 - Rash or hives
 - Chest tightness and shortness of breath
 - Shock

III. The client/caregiver can list common items containing latex found in the health care facility.

- Medical gloves
- Medication vial stoppers
- Band-aids
- Stethoscope tubing
- Urinary catheters
- Tourniquets
- Blood pressure cuff and tubing
- Intravenous injection ports

IV. The client/caregiver can list common items containing latex in the home or work areas.

- Balloons
- Rubber toys

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- Pacifiers and baby bottle nipples
- Rubber bands
- Adhesive tape
- Diapers and sanitary pads
- Condoms
- Dental bands

V. The client/caregiver can list ways to deal with latex allergy.

- A. Avoid direct exposure to latex.
- B. Educate yourself to which products contain latex.
- C. Wear a medical alert bracelet or identification.
- D. Inform any employer of your allergy.
- E. Discuss with your physician the severity of your allergy and whether you could benefit from use of epinephrine self-injection pen.

RESOURCES

American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology
www.aaaai.org

CDC National Institute for Occupational Health and Safety
www.cdc.gov/niosh

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