

July 24, 2003

## **Urgent Latex Allergy Issues**

This correspondence has been written in response to questions regarding ASTM proposals on glove color differentiation of latex gloves and the use of latex gloves in food services. I have included draft proposals for the ASTM standards as well as the addresses of individuals to whom you may want to express relevant experiences and opinions.

### **Color (proposed draft)**

ASTM is discussing whether to include restrictions on glove colors in upcoming revisions of medical glove standards. Color restrictions would allow individuals to distinguish between latex and synthetic gloves.

X.X. To facilitate the rapid identification of natural rubber latex gloves by those who must avoid their use due to latex allergy, glove coloration should be restricted as follows:

X.X.1. Natural rubber latex glove coloration shall be limited to the buff, beige and tan tones reflective of their historical appearance. This limitation also applies to natural rubber latex/synthetic blends. Alternatively, the presence of latex may be distinguished by so designating on each individual glove.

X.X.2. Synthetic gloves must be readily distinguished from natural rubber latex by limiting their finished appearance to colors other than the buff, beige or tan tones. Alternatively, gloves may be distinguished by identifying "synthetic" or the base material composition (e.g. vinyl) on each individual glove.

### **Food Handling (proposed draft)**

Discussions are currently being held as to whether natural rubber latex gloves should be restricted from use in food services. It is proposed that the new ASTM standard on gloves for use in food services shall contain wording similar to the following:

It has been demonstrated that allergens can be transferred to foods when natural rubber latex gloves are worn during food preparation. To avoid the risk of reactions by latex allergic individuals who consume such foods, latex gloves shall be prohibited from use in the preparation or handling of foods.

## **Addresses**

Individuals who wish to express their opinions, provide additional data or relate patient or employee experiences relevant to either or both of these topics may address their comments to:

### **FDA:**

Dr. David W Feigl HFZ-001  
Director CDRH  
FDA  
9200 Corporate Blvd.  
Rockville MD 20850  
301-827-7975  
[dwf@cdrh.fda.gov](mailto:dwf@cdrh.fda.gov)

Dr. Chiu Lin HFZ- 420  
Chief Device Evaluations  
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9200 Corporate Blvd.  
Rockville MD 20850  
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[cxl@cdrh.fda.gov](mailto:cxl@cdrh.fda.gov)

(Food only): Joseph A. Levitt Esq  
Director, FDA  
Food Safety and Applied Nutrition  
200 C Street, S.W.  
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Washington, DC 20204  
301-436-1600  
[joseph.levitt@cfsan.fda.gov](mailto:joseph.levitt@cfsan.fda.gov)

### **OSHA:**

Dr. Richard Fairfax, Director  
Directorate of Enforcement Program  
DOL/OSHA  
200 Constitution Ave. NW  
Washington DC 20210  
202-693-2100

### **NIOSH:**

Dr. Al Munson, Director  
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Mail Stop 020  
1095 Willowdale Road  
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[akm5@cdc.gov](mailto:akm5@cdc.gov)

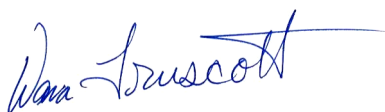
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### **ASTM:**

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**Please pass this document to anyone you feel would be interested.**

Thank you,



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