



**Division of Health Care
Latex Allergy Policy**

Latex products are common in the medical environment. Allergic responses to latex can range from irritation and allergic contact dermatitis to the possibility of life threatening anaphylactic shock. Guidelines have been established at Quinsigamond Community College to provide information to potential allied health and nursing program applicants and staff who are sensitive to latex.

Latex free environments are seldom available in either clinical or academic settings. Therefore, an individual with a latex allergy/sensitivity wearing alternative vinyl or nitrile gloves is still exposed to latex residue of others working in the area or to latex present in the equipment, models and mannequins. Although latex gloves are the most prominent source of latex allergens, many other products contain latex including, but not limited to:

- Blood pressure cuffs, medication vials, syringe connectors and wound drains
- Stethoscopes, catheters, respirators, and goggles
- Oral and nasal airways, surgical masks, and electrode pads
- Endotracheal tubes, syringes, IV tubing, and tourniquets

Any student who has or develops symptoms consistent with latex allergy/sensitivity is advised to consult a qualified allergist for evaluation prior to enrollment in the Health Programs at Quinsigamond Community College. All such evaluations are at the student's expense. If it is determined that a student suffers from a latex sensitivity/allergy and the student desires an academic adjustment, including auxiliary aids or service, or reasonable accommodation due to this condition, the student must contact the College's Office of Disability Services at 508-854-4471.

As with all matters related to one's health, the utmost precautions should be taken by the student to reduce the risk of exposure and allergic reactions. This may include the carrying of an epi-pen by the individual or other precautions as advised by the student's health care provider. It is the responsibility of the student with a latex sensitivity to understand and acknowledge the risks associated with continued exposure to latex during a clinical education and healthcare career, even when reasonable accommodations are made and to regularly consult with his/her health care provider.

In an effort to minimize the presence of latex in the College's lab facilities, Quinsigamond Community College will provide latex-free and powder-free gloves in all College lab facilities. Should a clinical agency site NOT provide latex-free gloves, the College will provide latex-free gloves for clinical use. Additionally, the College is taking the following steps to minimize latex in its lab facilities: 1) replacement of all gloves in use by faculty and students with nitrile or vinyl gloves; 2) maintaining an inventory of all products/equipment and supplies in the Health Care Division that contain or could contain latex; and 3) future purchase of latex-safe supplies and equipment whenever possible.

As with all students in the Health Care Programs, a student with a latex sensitivity or allergy is required to satisfactorily complete all requirements and technical standards of the program to which they have been accepted.



Health Care Division

Student Latex Release Form for Students with Identified Latex Allergy

I _____, disclose to Quinsigamond Community College Division of Health Care and _____ Program that I have a sensitivity/allergy to latex.

I have attached documentation of testing that I have received from a physician confirming this allergy/sensitivity. This documentation clears me for participation in college lab activities and clinical rotations as required in the _____ Program's Handbook in which I am enrolled.

I understand that, due to my participation in a Health Program, I may be exposed to latex, which may result in a worsening of my pre-existing latex sensitivity. I understand that continued exposure may cause my condition to worsen and potentially lead to life threatening symptoms. I accept these risks knowingly and voluntarily and will take all reasonable precautions to prevent such exposure.

Further, I understand that:

- It is my responsibility to be aware of potential exposure to latex in my learning environment and to avoid or minimize such exposure;
- It is my responsibility to notify each of my course instructors/clinical faculty or preceptors of my latex sensitivity/allergy in every situation where potential exposure may be present;
- It is my responsibility to follow up with my health care provider/allergist for services related to my latex allergy and follow their recommendations;
- It is my responsibility to assume any costs related to latex allergy screening and treatment;
- It is my responsibility to have on my person emergency medication (Epi-Pen or other) as prescribed by my physician in the event of an allergic/anaphylactic reaction;
- College and clinical labs are not a latex free environment and therefore the risk of exposure to latex cannot be eliminated; and
- Quinsigamond Community College cannot guarantee a latex free environment during College lab activities or clinical rotations.

By my signature, I release and discharge Quinsigamond Community College, its officers and employees from all responsibility and liability related to personal injury suffered by me because of exposure to latex in the College's lab or during a clinical rotation.

Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature if Student is under 18 years old

Witness