

**Springfield Technical Community College**  
**School of Health & Patient Simulation**  
**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 Springfield Technical 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 allergen, 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 a School of Health & Patient Simulation program. 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 (413)755-4785.

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 association 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, Springfield Technical 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 a School of Health & Patient Simulation program that contain or could contain latex.
- 3) Future purchasing of latex-safe supplies and equipment whenever possible.

As with all students in a School of Health & Patient Simulation program, 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.