

SUMMARY OF:

EFFECTS OF LATEX AVOIDANCE ON LATEX SENSITIZATION, ATOPY AND ALLERGIC DISEASES IN PATIENTS WITH SPINA BIFIDA

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BACKGROUND

Spina bifida (SB) children are at risk of latex allergy. In the Charite group, before latex-free was introduced, SB children showed almost double the atopy than other children and a 50% sensitization incidence rate with 33% of SB children experiencing clinical latex allergy. Non-latex surgeries were instated 10 years ago for SB children leading to a decrease in both sensitization and allergy incidence in this group.

OVERVIEW

Natural Rubber Latex (NRL) is very prevalent in hospitals posing a life-threatening risk. NRL allergy is the second cause of intraoperative anaphylactic reaction. Implementation of latex-free environments is the most important action to minimize the development of latex sensitization and possible anaphylactic reaction.

RESULTS

120 SB children between 6 months and 12.5 years old were evaluated between September 2005 and October 2006. These patients were compared with 87 SB patients born before latex-free prophylaxis was instated in Germany (1994) and who had latex surgery. Only 5% of SB children showed latex IgE vs. 55% of control group, 10 times more. The clinically relevant latex allergy was also lower, only 0.83% (1/120) vs. 37.2% (32/86) in the control group. The prevalence of latex atopy and allergic diseases in the SB children that were operated in a latex-free environment are comparable with the weighted population of 12,403 children.

CONCLUSION

NRL sensitization is dramatically reduced in a latex-free environment. This is an example of primary prevention where SB children were not sensitized via direct tissue contact. Implementing a latex-free environment for SB children from first day of life prevents both allergic sensitization and clinically relevant allergy to latex.

References 1. Blumchen et al., Effects Of Latex Avoidance On Latex Sensitization, Atopy And Allergic Diseases In Patients With Spina Bifida. *Allergy* 65 (2010): 1585-1593

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