



# Latex

## Quick Facts

- › As many as 6-12% or up to 37 million people in the U.S. are sensitive to latex.<sup>1</sup>
- › Of anaphylactic reactions in adult surgery, 12-40% are from latex allergy.<sup>2</sup>
- › Studies show that history alone may not be sufficient for diagnosing latex allergy.<sup>3</sup>
- › Healthcare workers who are regularly exposed to latex containing devices and products maintain an incidence of allergic response from 8-17%.<sup>4</sup>
- › Patients or employees who experience latex reactions may attempt to secure compensation for injury due to latex exposure. Costs to hospitals, doctors, or nurses can be high:
  - Average cost to obtain a malpractice defense verdict: \$94,000<sup>5</sup>
  - Average malpractice punitive award: \$22.6 million<sup>6</sup>

See your local ICU Medical Critical Care Device Specialist to [discuss pulmonary artery catheters without latex components.](#)



# References

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2. Taylor J.S., Erkek E. Latex allergy: diagnosis and management. *Dermatol Ther.* 2004;17(4):289–301. | Porri F, Lemiere C., Birnbaum J., et al. Prevalence of latex sensitization in subjects attending health screening: implications for a perioperative screening. *Clin Exp Allergy.* 1997;27(4):413–417.
3. Reddy S. Latex allergy. *Am Fam Physician.* 1998;57(1):93–102. | Woods J.A., Lambert S., Platts-Mills T.A., Drake D.B., Edlich R.F. Natural rubber latex allergy: spectrum, diagnostic approach, and therapy. *J Emerg Med.* 1997;15(1):71–85. | Hamilton R.G., Adkinson N.F. Jr. Diagnosis of natural rubber latex allergy: multicenter latex skin testing efficacy study. Multicenter Latex Skin Testing Study Task Force. *J Allergy Clin Immunol.* 1998;102(3):482–490.
4. ALAA Article: AANA Latex Protocol; [www.latexallergyresources.org/articles/aana-latex-protocol](http://www.latexallergyresources.org/articles/aana-latex-protocol)
5. American Medical Society, Medical Liability Reform-Now! <http://www.ama-assn.org/go/mlrnow>; citing Physician's Assn. of Am., PIAA Claim Trend Analysis: 2004 ed.
6. Rustad, M. Neglecting the neglected: The impact of non-economic damage caps on meritorious nursing home lawsuits, 14 *Elder L.J.* 331, 376-77 (2006) (noting median punitive award was \$4 million compared to median compensatory award of \$721,109).