American Latex Allergy Association

Anne Marie's Story

My 13 year old daughter has had a latex allergy since she was 2. It was discovered at her dentist appointment first reaction seemed like a mosquito bite on her face. Next visit 6months later a few more hives around mouth and lips thought it was from the fluoride treatment. Her third visit we came home with the dentist hand print on her face made out of hives everywhere he had touched her. Looking back I?ve often wondered if her allergy started before that first dentist appt I breast fed her she would spit out pacifiers and would not take a bottle tried all different types of nipples and she would refuse. She would get little ulcers in her mouth thought it was a reaction from food. When I weaned her from nursing at one year old she went straight to drinking from a straw. Her first severe and devastating reaction for her was at a birthday party they had balloons but were tied to vases and very high towards the ceiling we thought it would be okay as long as she didn?t touch them she was playing and carrying the little kids who had been playing with the balloons and I noticed hives where the little kids touched her. Washed her face and hands and told her she couldn?t carry the little ones I still only thought of it as a contact type of allergy. Then the magician started to blow balloons and let out the air even after my husband had asked him not to throw the balloons in the air. My daughter complained of her throat feeling funny. I didn?t even carry Benadryl at that time. We left the party and she cried all the way home.

This past year has been the worst for my daughter she had a reaction from Christmas packing material and got short of breath started to panic and had a hard time taking Benadryl I asked the doctor for an epi pen and it totally freaked her out. She researched on line reading others stories, she became totally scared and didn?t want to touch anything scared to eat she worried what pot or utensil I used to cook with, how I opened the cans if I touched outside of the can where the paper label is sealed she was walking around like a robot even in our home scared to sit on the couch constantly washing her hands? I took her to an allergist hoping she would hear from a doctor that she is not alone others need to use epi pens better to know your allergy and have the tools to treat it right away. My daughter was angry I thought it would never get better. Her being able to deal with this for life. She is much better now taking precautions when needed. Understanding her allergy helped a lot and not letting it control her.

Then, the orthodontist was a totally insensitive person. He knew of her allergy said it was not a problem. He would use latex free gloves for her. But, latex on others so cross contaminated she?d come out with her throat feeling funny every time he treated her most times only the assistants would work on her braces. The last reaction progressed to itchy watery eyes her throat feeling funny and numbness and tingling around her mouth gave her Benadryl as soon as we got to the car as I was driving home her symptoms started to progress so turned around and headed to the ER. I think that was a fear for both of us latex being everywhere in a hospital setting we were so fortunate to have a very understanding ER doctor and staff they cleaned the room before they put my daughter in it stethoscopes were covered they also said that they are a latex free ER phew we could relax a bit they gave her prednisone and monitored her for a while sent us home with instructions to continue Benadryl for three days

our pediatrician said to only give the Benadryl if she continued to have symptoms which she did have for three days itchy eyes and nose and a bit of throat irritation. The ER experience actually helped her see that doctors and nurses do understand and can help her. Not all are like the insensitive orthodontist.

We have since changed orthodontist and had her braces removed 6 months early as the next part of treatment would have been with the elastic bands.

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