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American Latex Allergy Association
“School Safety Guidelines For Latex-Allergic Students” 2ND Edition

MILWAUKEE, WI (June 6th, 2011) – In response to numerous queries from schools, the American Latex Allergy Association has released the 2nd Edition of the resource manual titled “School Safety Guidelines For Latex-Allergic Students.” This 91-page manual contains resources to educate and assist school personnel as they strive to create a latex-safe learning environment.

Natural rubber latex is produced from the sap of the Malaysian rubber tree, Hevea brasiliensis, and is a component in over 40,000 medical and household products. Some individuals who have repeated exposure can develop an allergic response to the proteins in natural rubber latex, resulting in symptoms ranging from mild to life threatening. Symptoms of natural rubber latex allergy can include skin rashes, nasal congestion, itchy or teary eyes, facial swelling, chest tightness, and/or breathing difficulty. Individuals with a severe natural rubber latex allergy can experience anaphylaxis, a potentially fatal allergic response.

Certain students are at higher risk for developing latex allergy, including those with a history of other allergies (atopy); a history of spina bifida; a history of frequent urogenital surgeries and/or catheterizations; a history of other frequent surgeries; and a history of certain food allergies, such as banana, kiwi, avocado, chestnut, passion fruit, celery, and melon. The medical community uses preventative latex precautions when treating these students, and latex-safe protocols should be used in the school environment, even if symptoms are not present, in order to prevent the development of a latex allergy.

“School Safety Guidelines For Latex-Allergic Students” contains information about the prevalence and risk factors for latex allergy; suggested guidelines for creating a latex-safe school; sample school policies and forms; state and national legislation; position statements from the National Association of School Nurses and the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology; a latex-free school alternative products list and other product resources; and educational articles.

The manual has been partially funded by Dey Pharma, L.P. and will be available from the American Latex Allergy Association for $45.00.

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The American Latex Allergy Association (A.L.E.R.T., Inc.) is a national, nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization whose mission is to create awareness of latex allergy through education and to provide support to individuals who have been diagnosed with latex allergy.