

FDA approves new type of latex glove

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The U.S. Food and Drug Administration Wednesday announced approval of the first glove made from a new form of natural rubber latex, guayule latex.

The FDA said the Yulex Patient Examination Glove is derived from the guayule bush, a desert plant native to the Southwestern United States.

The glove is designed for use by people allergic to traditional latex gloves that are made from the milky sap of a rubber tree, *Hevea brasiliensis*. The sap contains a protein that might trigger allergic reactions, especially after prolonged and repeated contact. Officials estimate between 3 percent and 22 percent of all healthcare workers are allergic to traditional latex, which can produce severe reactions such as difficulty breathing, itching, rash, hives, and in some rare cases shock might occur.

The FDA said the new guayule latex gloves produced no allergic response on first exposure, even among people who are highly allergic to traditional latex.

However, since there are no data on people's long-term experience with the new gloves, the FDA said the product will initially carry a warning about the potential for allergic reactions.

The Yulex glove is manufactured by the Yulex Corp. of Maricopa, Ariz.

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