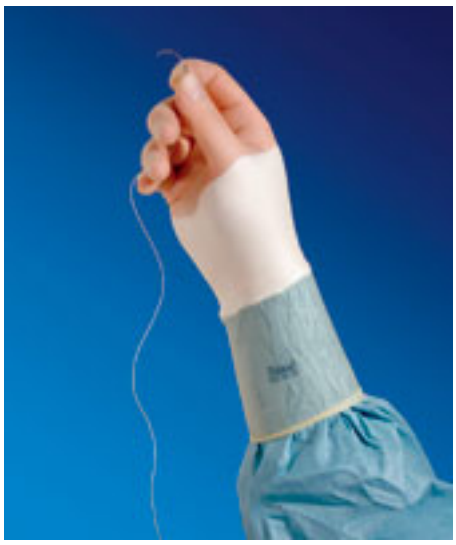
You’re Covered

It's pretty much second nature now, the use of surgical or exam gloves. From a routine physical in small town doctor's office to a prolonged heart transplant procedure, essentially every interaction between doctor and patient begins with snap of a glove being donned.

The use of gloves in surgery can be traced back as far as the mid-1700s, when they were occasionally used in obstetrics and gynecological exams. The first rubber gloves did not see clinical use until around 1890, to protect the surgeon's or nurse's hands from harsh chemicals. Disposable natural rubber latex gloves arrived on the scene in the 1960s, but personal preferences and occasional allergic reactions to latex kept their use from catching on to any large scale. It was not until the AIDS epidemic of the early 1980s, and the Center for Disease Control & Prevention's (CDC) Universal Precautions in response to that epidemic, that glove use saw its greatest upsurge. In 1987 alone, glove usage increased ten-fold, putting pressure on glove manufacturers to meet the increased need for gloves and address the rapidly growing concerns over glove comfort, safety, and ease of use.

For a time, it was the disposable natural rubber latex gloves that were the standard in hospitals across the country, but with so many healthcare workers using the gloves, issues of latex allergies and the potential dangers of glove powder needed to be addressed to promote glove usage and compliance to the CDC directives. This has been the goal of glove manufacturers for the past two decades&#151to provide the healthcare industry with gloves that are comfortable and safe for both the hospital staff and the patients.

Ansell Healthcare Products LLC is a global manufacturer and marketer of latex and latex-free surgical and exam gloves, supplying hospitals and other clinical settings with such familiar brands as Encore&reg, Micro-Touch&reg, and Derma Prene&reg Ultra surgical gloves. With over 100 years in the glove business, Ansell has a long record of innovations in glove development and design, and continues to broaden its product lines.



One of Ansell's latest offerings is the Micro-Touch&reg Smooth Nitrile powder-free, latex-free exam glove, which provides excellent chemical and puncture resistance and is FDA approved for handling chemotherapy drugs. This non-sterile, 100-percent nitrile glove reduces powder- and latex-related complications. It has a smooth finish that provides superior tactile sensitivity, while its blue color makes it easy to identify as a nitrile glove.

Ansell Healthcare also has two new latex gloves available to the medical market. The Micro-Touch&reg ErgoGrip&#153 powder-free, latex, hand-specific exam glove and the Gammex SureFit&#153 powder-free latex surgical glove. The Micro-Touch ErgoGrip features a smooth, anti-slip finish that provides a tactile sensitivity similar to that of surgical gloves, while its polymer coating provides excellent dry and damp hand donnability. The Gammex SureFit glove is specially manufactured using Ansell's proprietary process to produce a cuff that grips and holds, keeping the glove in place throughout the procedure and minimizing the slippery effect caused by some surgical gowns. All of these gloves provide the comfort, protection, and tactile sensitivity that have come to be expected by today's healthcare workers.

Among the largest supplier of exam gloves in North America, Medline Industries employs several unique patented technologies and innovative designs to provide a full line of gloves in a variety of styles to meet the needs of any operating room.

Medline's Aloetouch®&reg Technology has produced a line of latex and latex-free surgical gloves with pure Aloe Vera on the inside of the gloves to address dry, irritated hands in the OR. The Aloetouch gloves are clinically proven to heal contact dermatitis, which is a big concern for many care givers that wash their hands and wear gloves on a daily basis. The latest product in the Aloetouch line is the Aloetouch&reg 3G latex-free exam glove. This affordable glove offers all of the benefits of existing Aloetouch gloves, but is made using a soft material that exhibits the same tactile sensitivity as latex, without the risks associated with latex proteins.

Medline also manufactures Isolex&#153, a latex-free polyisoprene material that is used to produce the Medline Sensicare surgical gloves. This material mimics latex, providing hospitals with a safe and comfortable alternative to latex surgical gloves.

All of Medline's latex-free and powder-free latex gloves have reinforced cuffs that significantly reduce tearing and incorporate an anti-rolldown cuff design that helps reduce cuff rolldown common with most powder-free gloves on the market. Medline fully inspects all of their surgical gloves to levels more stringent than the FDA requires for all major defects. The result is a higher quality glove that reduces the chance for contamination during a procedure.

Kimberly-Clark's SAFESKIN&#153 Powder-Free Latex Surgical Gloves are designed to provide the features that conscientious healthcare workers and institutions demand, such as strength, durability, excellent barrier properties combined with uncompromised tactile sensitivity, comfort, and easy damp or dry hand donnability.

The SAFESKIN PF is the product line's standard, meeting the majority of surgical requirements, but there are other SAFESKIN gloves that provide increased safety and properties required for specialized cases. The SAFESKIN PF MICRO is measurably thinner than SAFESKIN PF, yet retains its durability. It is designed for microsurgery or any procedure where maximum tactile sensitivity is required. Its non-slip bisque finish enhances grip. The SAFESKIN PF ORTHO is thicker than SAFESKIN PF, for more rigorous procedures that require increased durability and strength. The SAFESKIN PF UNDERGLOVE is specifically designed for ease of double gloving and can be worn beneath all three SAFESKIN surgical gloves for greater resistance to barrier breach.

All SAFESKIN* Surgical Gloves are tested for tissue compatibility, covering Primary Skin Irritation, Sensitization Maximization, Acute Systemic Toxicity, Hemolysis, Embryotoxicity, and Pyrogenicity. Kimberly-Clark plans to continue providing solutions to improve the health and well being of health care professionals and their patients by introducing new benefits to our latex surgical glove line in 2006.

Sempermed USA, Inc. is focused exclusively on hand protection and manufactures and markets their gloves worldwide. They offer a comprehensive line of gloves available both powdered and powder-free in latex, Nitrile, vinyl, and chloroprene with a focus on quality and consistency that ensures each glove provides the fit and functions required for whatever task is at hand. Sempermed's newest addition to their glove line is the Syntegra SIS surgical glove, manufactured with a patented styrene-isoprene-styrene copolymer that lacks processing accelerator chemicals that can cause many glove-related sensitivities. A chlorination-free formula eliminates the slippery feel and strong odor often associated with chlorinated

gloves. Sempermed Syntegra can also be double-gloved for added protection. Cardinal Health offers an extensive, high quality, and technologically-advanced line of medical gloves. Available in latex or synthetic, powered or powder-free, Cardinal's gloves are developed to surpass industry quality and performance standards to ensure the protection and safety of both the patient and healthcare worker.

Cardinal Health recently developed a new line of medical gloves featuring their proprietary Neu-Thera&#153 treatment. Designed for, and tested by, health-care professionals, Neu-Thera is an emollient that is clinically proven to not only moisturize, but also improve skin health and protect hands from irritation.

The Neu-Thera formulation is currently available in the company's Esteem&#153 synthetic exam and surgical gloves. Esteem surgical gloves are made of polyisoprene, which exhibits high strength and barrier properties, elasticity, and softness. The Esteem exam gloves are made of nitrile and provide great chemical resistance, barrier integrity, elasticity, and strength.

Regent Medical offers an exclusively powder-free medical glove line, and has been making advancements in hand and barrier protection since 1983. Their technically advanced glove line includes Biogel&reg powder-free, latex surgical gloves; Biogel Skinsense&#153 powder-free, non-latex surgical gloves; and Biogel Optifit&#153 powder-free surgical gloves which provide a precision-tailored fit that forms to the contours of the arm.

Now, Regent is breaking new ground in medical glove technology, creating an entirely new category of surgical glove for the glove industry&#151deproteinised natural rubber latex.

The new latex powder-free Biogel Eclipse&#153 is the first surgical glove made from highly-refined, deproteinised natural rubber latex. Deproteinised natural rubber latex is the finished product of a patented process which reduces extractable latex proteins in the raw material by 90 percent.

The Biogel Eclipse glove not only significantly reduces the risk of latex protein related allergies, but also provides a new level of fit, feel, and comfort in natural rubber latex. The result of the deproteinising process is a softer, suppler gloving category than standard latex gloves, while maintaining the comfort, flexibility, and tactile sensitivity that is associated with natural rubber latex.

As surgical gloves become more and more important given the increase in knowledge concerning infection and cross-contamination in hospital settings, it is good to see so many advancements in glove making technology. And with nationwide, across-the-board glove use only in its second decade, it is safe to assume that the technology&#151and safety&#151will only continue to grow.

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