

# SAFETY MATTERS

Creating a Culture of Safety

October Quarter 2024



**Laboratory Center**

## Announcement

We have moved our safety blog to quarterly. Please participate, volunteer for an interview, and keep sending feedback as we all learn from each other.



## Quality is Safety

This was a recent topic at our Continuous Quality Improvement departmental Safety meeting. A great discussion followed.

Quality and Safety are both connected and dependent; Improvements in quality have a positive impact on safety and improvement in safety has a positive impact in quality. A robust quality management plan will assure you are identifying safety risks and able to manage them if they occur.

From the CDC:

<https://www.cdc.gov/lab-quality/php/about/index.html>



- High-quality laboratory science keeps laboratory professionals safe and protects community health.
- CDC provides clinical and public health laboratories with training and technical assistance.
- Learn about the laboratory quality management systems used in clinical testing.

## DAIDS GCLP Common Audit Finding

**“A Latex Allergy Program was not available.”**



Every laboratory should have a lab/department/institute Latex allergy policy. Some staff members or participants may have an allergy to latex or present as sensitive to latex. These allergies can develop over time.

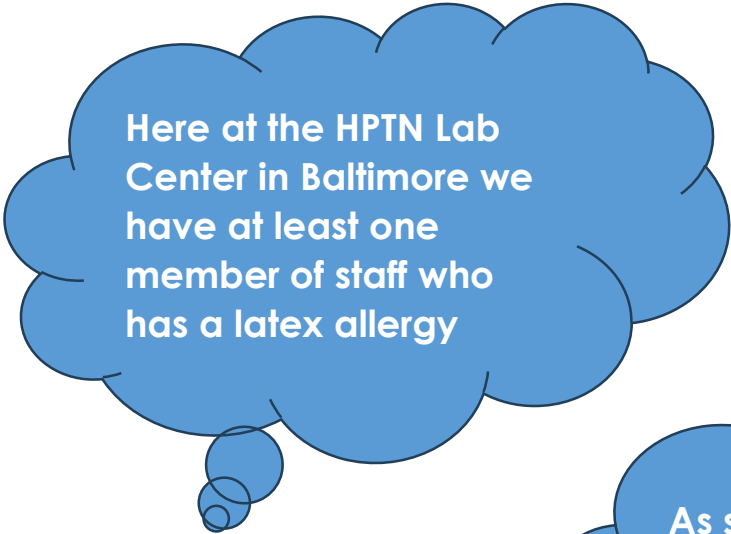
Latex can be found in gloves, rubber bands, balloons, and more. There is no cure, only treatments to minimize the symptoms.

## From The GCLP Standards:


Section 9 *Personnel Safety*, subpart h *Safety Policies*

*Latex Allergy Program: The institution or laboratory should have a written program to protect personnel and participants from allergic reactions from exposures to natural rubber latex in gloves and other products. For laboratories that are part of healthcare systems, it may be appropriate to reference institutional or healthcare systemwide policies.*

## Practicing What We Preach



Here at the HPTN Lab Center in Baltimore we have at least one member of staff who has a latex allergy



As such, we are particularly observant of our institutional latex policy



We do not use latex rubber gloves or rubber bands.

We remove all rubber bands from received shipments and outside sources (mail, etc.)

Latex alternatives are available and suitable for the -80C storage boxes.

Keep latex allergies in mind when shipping to the HPTN LC or other locations.

## Reader Poll

### Reader poll results: (For the July poll)

Thanks to all who participated!

**Question 1** had a 100% response rate for "In our lab, we check (and document) chemical spill kits for location, contents, and usability at least once per year."

There were no responders without a spill kit, and all responders check their kits.

**Question 2** also had a 100% response rate, "We have a first aid kit in our lab (for minor injuries not needing medical attention under our policies)."

There were no responders without a first aid kit, and all responders had it inside the lab area.

**For additional responses and comments**, over 60% stated they check some other kit or item at least annually. Periodicity of checks varied, mainly weekly or monthly, and items ranged from fire extinguishers or smoke detectors to PPE or broken glass clean up kits.

## October Quarter Poll:

Holiday closures and disruptions to routine operations. Respond [HERE](#).

## Feedback Request

Thanks to those who sent back messages about our July 2024 edition. We are working to incorporate suggestions and topics into future safety bulletins.

Need more on a specific topic?

Ideas for upcoming subject matter?

Let us know your thoughts and give feedback at

[hptnlc-lab@jhmi.edu](mailto:hptnlc-lab@jhmi.edu)

## Volunteers needed for safety focused interviews

The LC would like to speak with labs and have a short 10 minute / 5 question interview to learn more about our audience. Interviews or selected quotes may be published in this newsletter.

Please contact us at [hptnlc-lab@jhmi.edu](mailto:hptnlc-lab@jhmi.edu) if interested.