

# Vecchie e nuove tipologie di guanti in commercio e possibili implicazioni clinico-preventive: materiali e patologie, qualcosa è migliorato?

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## KEY WORDS

Latex allergy; gloves; health care workers

## SUMMARY

**«Old and new types of sanitary gloves: what has improved?».** **Background:** During the eighties a large increase in latex gloves production was observed because of the high demand of gloves in health care settings. In this period a low compliance to minimal quality standard was detected and the poor glove quality was associated with an increase of both irritant and allergic glove-related diseases. Since the second half of nineties health care workers and manufacturers paid more attention to these problems and a trend to a gradual, even if slow, quality improvement was observed. Most frequently powder-free gloves and synthetic gloves were offered on the market. **Objectives:** The aim of this study was to highlight what has improved about materials and types of sanitary gloves during the last ten years. **Methods:** The information are based on a review of the scientific literature and practical experiences. **Results and conclusions:** Today a large selection of gloves made of different materials are available and they should be addressed to specific tasks. The review of the scientific literature and the analysis of many technical sheets provided by the manufacturers pointed out a trend to a better latex gloves quality (less chemical additives and generally a lower total protein content); sometimes data about a lower extractable latex allergens content are also available. Unfortunately detailed information on glove composition are not usually provided by the manufacturers; purchasers should require the manufacturing company to give comprehensive information and verify their reliability. Moreover the regulation in force should be adapted to higher quality standards. Powder-free and synthetic gloves consumption has improved but the use of synthetic rubber gloves should be further enhanced since some materials (e.g. neoprene and nitrile rubber) have a good biocompatibility and seem to have physical properties and protective efficacy similar to latex. Moreover allergic reactions to synthetic gloves (some chemical additives) are only occasional.