

Section: Division of Nursing

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**PROTOCOL**

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Approval: \_\_\_\_\_

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**HACKETTSTOWN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER**

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Revised by:

OR  
(Scope)

TITLE: Operating Room Surgical Glove Protocol

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**PURPOSE:** To promote patient, employee, and surgeon safety by providing guidelines for use of powder-free, latex-free gloves for operating room employees and powder-free gloves for surgeons.

**SUPPORTIVE**

**DATA:** Both patients and healthcare providers can be at serious risk from high allergen, powdered latex gloves. Traditionally, powder has been used to facilitate the release of latex gloves from their molds during the manufacturing process. It also facilitates the processing and donning of the gloves. Latex proteins bind with glove powder and are aerosolized when gloves are removed from the package, donned, or removed from the hands. Powdered gloves produce more latex proteins in the air than any other medical product (Bauer-Nyberg, 1999). There is sufficient research based evidence to conclude that powdered latex gloves contribute to the development of latex sensitivity and allergies in health care workers (Cuming, 2002). In addition, the unavoidable contamination of the operative field from powdered surgical gloves is well known and has been reported to cause many pathological effects in patients. These include post-operative infection, granulomas and adhesions (Van Den Toll et al, 2001).

**PROTOCOL:**

1. Operating room employees who function in the role of the scrub nurse shall set up all surgical cases with powder-free, latex-free gloves.
2. Operating room employees who function in the role of the scrub nurse shall wear powder-free, latex-free gloves for the duration for all surgical cases.
3. Operating room employees who function in the role of the circulating nurse shall wear powder-free, latex-free gloves when performing a betadine scrub which may be required for certain surgical cases.
4. All surgeons and assistants shall wear powder-free gloves for the duration of all surgical cases. Should a patient have a latex-allergy, all surgeons and assistants shall wear powder-free, latex-free gloves for the duration of the surgical case they are performing on that patient.
5. All anesthesiologists shall wear powder-free gloves when performing a spinal or epidural. Should a patient have a latex-allergy, all anesthesiologists shall wear powder-free, latex-free gloves when performing a spinal or epidural on that patient.

References: Bauer-Nyberg, D. (1999). Powder-free and latex-safe: how to get there from here. *Surgical Services Management*, 5 (7), 38-42.

Cuming, R. (2002). Reducing the hazards of exposure to cornstarch glove powder. *AORN Journal*, 76 (2), 288-295.

Van Den Toll, M., Haverlag, R., Van Rossen, M., Bonthuis, F., Marquet, R., Jeekel, J. (2001). Glove powder promotes adhesion formation and facilitates tumor cell adhesion and growth. *British Journal of Surgery*, 88, 1258-1263.