MARKET SURVEY OF NATURAL RUBBER LATEX MEDICAL GLOVES – ALLERGENS ASSAYS.

Further to assays of leachable proteins and checks of labelling and users technical documents provided by the manufacturer, performed within the framework of the market survey of natural rubber latex medical gloves, afssaps carried out, in 2004, specific assays of major latex allergens released from gloves previously submitted to the protein assays.
Assay was performed by using the immonenzymatic Fitkit from Fit Biotech based on monoclonal antibodies specifically directed against Hev b1, Hev b3, Hev b5 and Hev b6.02 allergens.
From the results obtained, it appears that :

- 100% of the powder free gloves tested show a cumulated allergens rate <1µg/g. In 95% of the cases, these gloves have a total proteins rate <50µg/g.
- In the case of powdered gloves, 58% shows a cumulated allergens rate >1µg/g.
- 90% of gloves with a cumulated allergens rate>1µg/g show a total protein rate >50µg/g

In conclusion, powder free gloves show generally a lower allergenic potential than powdered gloves. In the case of powdered gloves, gloves with total protein rate <50µg/g show the lowest allergens rate.
These results confirm the interest of the powder free gloves in the management of the latex allergy risk in hospitals in parallel of instructions of use restricting the latex gloves use to indications where they are justified compared with alternatives.