

Medical gloves with Neu-Thera® soothe hands in pediatric hospital



Medical Gloves with Neu-Thera®

OR nurses and technicians at Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters in Norfolk, Va., spend the majority of their days wearing gloves. Until they tried Cardinal Health's gloves with Neu-Thera® formulation, they also spent a great deal of time and effort trying to keep their hands healthy.

The operating suites in the 186-licensed-bed pediatric hospital are the sites of more than 40 procedures a day, performed on patients ranging from newborns to young adults. The surgical staff wears gloves most of the time, whether they are scrubbing in on a number of short procedures or working on fewer, lengthier operations. Constant wear, as well as frequent hand washing, caused irritation and sweating that led to rough, red, chapped, dry skin that could become open and scaly, leaving hands unattractive, uncomfortable and very difficult to improve.

"People on our unit were bringing their own lotions in," said Joan Brooks, nursing manager. "We're supposed to use what the hospital supplies, but we didn't have anything here that would stop the redness."

The hospital did what it could to help. At one point, the surgery department stocked eight different types of gloves in an effort to accommodate everyone's needs. Aside from the expense of buying multiple gloves, the department had to find separate places to store them so they would be used only by those who needed them.

Barbara Stein, director of infection control, said the situation wasn't all that unusual.

Still, when the hospital's Cardinal Health representative suggested a test on gloves with Neu-Thera®, she was intrigued.

"I wasn't looking for a new glove, but in theory, it sounded pretty exciting," she said. "And, I thought if it worked, it would be wonderful."

Gloves with Neu-Thera® feature a carefully balanced formulation created especially for healthcare workers, taking into consideration the differences in usage for surgical and exam gloves, as well as typical wear times.

The formulation includes gluconolactone, glycerin, provitamin B5 and chitosan to protect, restore, moisturize and soothe dry, irritated skin.

Susie Stefonowich, a PACU, day surgery and pre-op RN who is on the hospital's products committee, was impressed from the start.

"They let the products committee try them on, and even in just a few minutes I could feel a difference," she said. **"It felt like you had a protective coating, but it wasn't greasy or anything. It just felt good."**

That was the overall reaction when the gloves were tested on a group of nurses, surgical assistants and scrub techs, too.

"When they told me they had something for a glove trial, I said 'Forget it – everybody's happy with the gloves we're already using,'" said Marilyn Kirsh, OR urology specialty nurse. "But I had to eat my words. **Nobody who's put them on has had a complaint."**

Amy Crowder is an OR tech who wears gloves from the time she arrives at the hospital until the time she leaves – eight to 10 hours a day.



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"The gloves I'd been using were kind of itchy, and my hands were pretty bad," she said. "They were red and inflamed, and my skin was always dry. I couldn't get it moisturized."

About a month after she started wearing gloves with Neu-Thera[®] formulation, she saw a difference.

"I've been a surgical tech for four years, and **these are the best gloves I've ever worn,**" she said. "Even my husband said my hands looked better and weren't as rough."

The difference was even more dramatic for other people.


"Almost the next day, people were coming to me and saying they really liked these new gloves," said Brooks. "**Within a week they noticed an improvement,** and then it was just constant improvement after that."

"In the OR, we really wanted to have people in the trial who considered (the condition of) their hands to be very poor," Stein said. "**After a month, they uniformly said the gloves were great and they wanted them all the time.** In my facility, if people don't like something, we will hear it, and I got very few negatives."

The response was so positive that gloves with Neu-Thera[®] will be used hospital-wide from now on. Not only will the shift save money by eliminating some of the need for different types of gloves, it may decrease referrals to occupational health and improve hand-hygiene compliance by making it less uncomfortable for people to wash their hands.

"Since we started with gloves with Neu-Thera[®], I'm not having to use the lotion that's outside every room," said Kirsh. "I'm not using the lotion, and my hands look just fine."

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