

Esteem® Gloves with Neu-Thera® Formulation earn extended run at Children's Health System



Medical Gloves with Neu-Thera® Formulation

Children's Health System in Birmingham, Alabama, wanted to evaluate Cardinal Health's Esteem® exam gloves with Neu-Thera® formulation by performing a two-week trial in several units. That proved impossible.

"The word was spreading about these gloves, and people were calling," says Brenda Vason, Manager of Infection Control for the 275-bed hospital. "First, we extended the trial to the emergency department, then to several clinics, then the OR called. The word just spread, and everybody wanted them."

At the end of the trial, everybody had them. The results were so positive that Children's now stocks only Esteem® latex-free exam gloves with Neu-Thera® formulation, in both nitrile and vinyl.

"One nurse who's been at the hospital for 35 years has had trouble with her hands the whole time," said Rochelle Reynolds, Charge Nurse Supervisor on a pulmonary care unit. "The problems had gotten worse over the last 10 years, and she wore cotton glove liners every day. She wore the Esteem® gloves for one week and the difference was amazing."

The nurse's hands, like those of many other healthcare professionals, showed the effects of constant hand washing and gloving. Red, rough and, at times, broken skin was uncomfortable and unsightly. While the glove liners the nurse used helped, they also took more time to put on – time she didn't always have on a 20-bed pediatric pulmonary care unit.

"Worse, hand problems were interfering with hand hygiene in units throughout the hospital," said Vason.

"We had changed our alcohol-based gels to moisturizing gels because we wanted to improve hand hygiene," she said. "We banned personal hand lotions and supplied some that are hospital approved. People with skin breakdowns didn't always perform proper hand hygiene, and they'd bring their own lotions anyway."

About 20 clinical staff members had hand problems severe enough for them to call employee health for assistance. Some were referred to dermatologists; others received specially ordered creams – the demand for which always increased in winter.

In addition to being uncomfortable and unsightly, damaged hands are an increased risk for bacterial infection and disease. The good news is that most skin reactions are irritations and most irritations can be managed with improved hand care and appropriate gloving.

Still, after years of hearing vendors tout the benefits of different gloves that didn't prove to be all that different, Reynolds and Vason were skeptical when Ben Lord, Cardinal Health Surgical Products Sales Representative, urged them to try Esteem® exam gloves with Neu-Thera® formulation.

"A lot of vendors say they have new products," said Reynolds. "I said we'd try them, but I really wasn't that hopeful. As soon as I put them on though, I could feel the difference. The fit was better, there was plenty of tactile sensation and they just felt good."



Treat your hands well®
while you treat your patients

Even Vason, who no longer spends long days in gloves, could tell these gloves were different.

"I saw the gloves at a vendor fair, but didn't pay too much attention," she said. "But they felt good to me, and I took them to the director's group. Once we started trying them in the units, the decision was easy."

Hospitals and their clinical staffs understand the importance of hand hygiene in providing safe, effective patient care, but skin problems can make it difficult to maintain proper hygiene procedures. Constant gloving only exacerbates the problems.

Medical gloves are designed to be occlusive. They are intended to prevent penetration by body fluids and other hazardous substances. However, their occlusive properties mean that skin moisture cannot evaporate, and the skin's protective barrier properties can be diminished.

Esteem® exam gloves with Neu-Thera® are coated with a proprietary formulation designed specifically to protect healthcare providers' hands. After extensive testing, Cardinal Health scientists developed the precise formulation to ease the redness, burning, itching and pain that repeated hand washing and extended periods of glove wearing can cause.

Esteem® exam gloves with Neu-Thera® are coated with a carefully balanced combination of gluconolactone, glycerin and Provitamin B5/panthenol. All have been proven to be effective in preventing and controlling damage due to dry skin and contact dermatitis.

Gluconolactone minimizes flakiness and restores skin smoothness. Glycerin moisturizes and plasticizes the stratum corneum (outermost layer of the skin), optimizing skin barrier function. Provitamin B5/panthenol restores softness and elasticity and helps heal minor wounds.

The challenge for many healthcare practitioners is to find the most protective and least damaging hand washing/gloving protocol. They may use glove liners, change hand soaps and try numerous lotions. Not all lotions, however, are compatible with antiseptic cleansers or hand scrubs, and those that contain mineral oil, petroleum or lanolin should not be used with natural rubber latex gloves. Even lotions that meet infection control standards must be used thoroughly and frequently if they are to adequately protect hands. However, clinical staff doesn't always have the time to meet recommended usage guidelines.

Esteem® exam gloves with Neu-Thera® can be an effective, comfortable and soothing solution. Even people who aren't subject to contact dermatitis often report that these non-latex gloves feel soft and comfortable from the first wearing. That feeling continues even after the gloves are removed, because they leave a thin, silky, invisible protective coating on hands. "And they work," stated Vason and Reynolds.

"During the trial period, I didn't have any negative comments at all," said Reynolds. "In fact, I always asked for negative comments, and still didn't get any. And I reviewed the product evaluation forms employees submitted, and there were no negative comments on them either. None. Everyone on the unit tried them, and everyone on the unit loved them."

Vason added, "I could see the healing in one nurse's hands after about two weeks. We'd never had anything her hands would respond to until we got these gloves. I'm sure we'll extend this to the physician staff as well!"

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