



Are you glove aware?

Reference: 2407378

Authorised by: Waitaha Canterbury and Te Tai o Poutini West Coast
Hand Hygiene Steering Group, June 2023

Te Whatu Ora
Health New Zealand

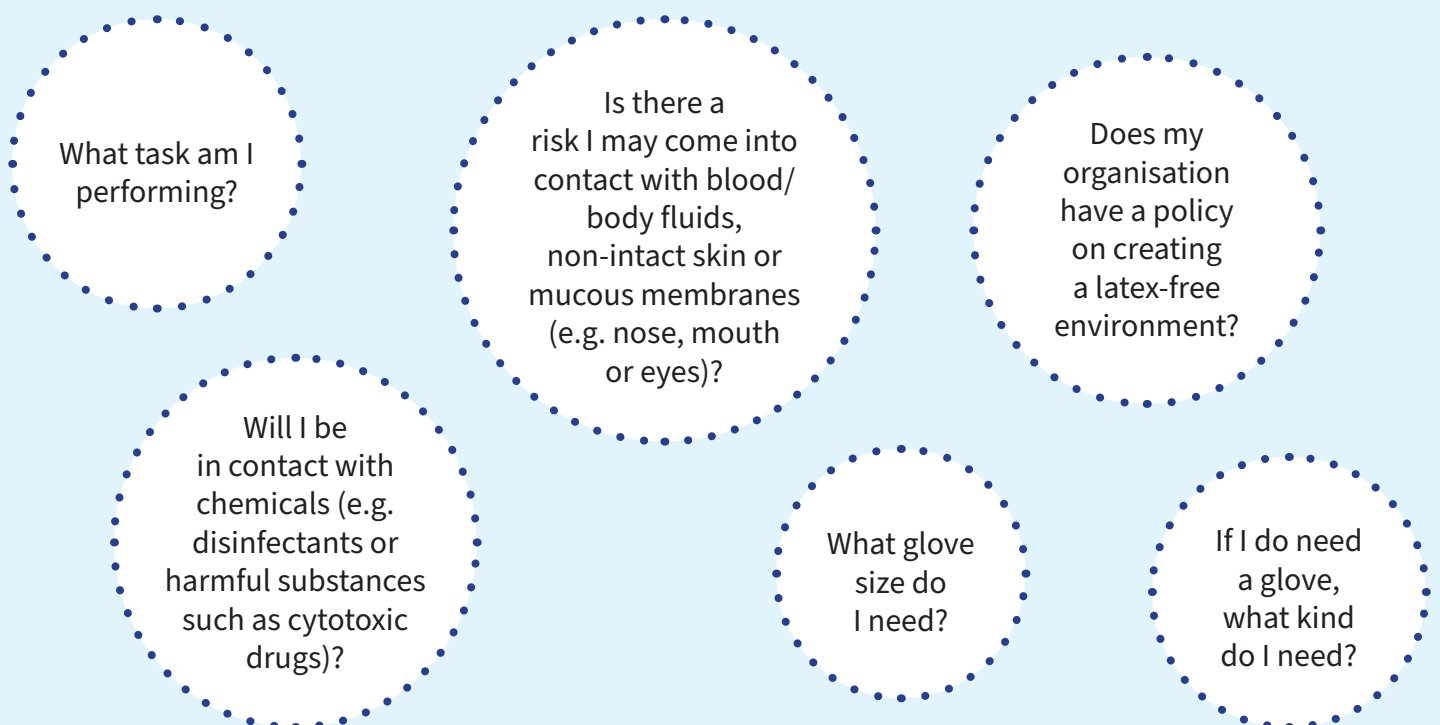
Be glove aware



It is important to assess when to use gloves and what type of glove to use.

The over use of gloves can put you at risk of work-related contact dermatitis. Patients can also be put at risk from infection as the wearing of gloves can prevent effective hand hygiene.

Before carrying out a task, it's crucial to ask the following questions to decide if a glove is needed, and which type of glove to wear:



When to put your gloves on

Gloves are single use items – they must be removed and changed between each patient or care task.

Only when hands are thoroughly dry (post-hand washing or alcohol rub) to reduce risk of dermatitis.

When in contact with blood/body fluid, non-intact skin, or mucous membranes.

When in contact with chemical hazards such as disinfectants, preserving agents or cytotoxic drugs.

Gloves must be removed and/or changed between each patient or care task.



Perform effective Hand Hygiene before and after every glove change

When to take your gloves off

As soon as gloves are suspected to be damaged.

When a single aspect of patient care/treatment has ended (e.g. gloves may be required to empty a urinary catheter before providing mouth care).

Gloves must be removed and/or changed between each patient or care task.

When no longer in contact with blood/body fluids, non-intact skin or mucous membranes.

When contact with chemicals has ended.

When it's necessary to carry out effective hand hygiene.

Perform effective Hand Hygiene before and after every glove change



Be skin aware

Approximately 1,000 health care workers develop work-related contact dermatitis every year (HSE, 2012).

Damaged or non-intact skin on the hands places both the patient and the health worker at risk because it prevents effective hand hygiene.

If you are having problems with the skin on your hands, follow the Occupational Health ([Wellbeing, Health & Safety – Hand Skin Health, flowchart](#))



Healthy hands

Dry, itchy, red skin are the early warning signs of contact dermatitis. Follow these simple steps to prevent and manage work-related contact dermatitis:



Ensure you use a good hand hygiene and drying technique.



Avoid direct contact between unprotected hands and hazardous substances.



Regularly apply approved hand moisturisers.



Check skin regularly for the first signs of itchy, dry or red skin.



Wearing gloves is no alternative to carrying out effective hand hygiene procedures.