



Lisa's

I started working in healthcare in 1990. I began to have topical reactions on my hands soon after. While assisting in a surgery one day, my reaction became severe and my eyes were nearly swollen shut. I stopped wearing the gloves, but continued to work around them for the next 10+years. I remember having to get cortisone injections in the middle of the work day to stop the sneezing fits and running nose and eyes.

I also had a root canal and developed significant problems afterwards. I know there is some controversy about gutta percha, but my physician felt this was the cause and recommended extraction. The problem resolved but two other teeth post root canal were also extracted as a precaution.

As I continued to work around latex I developed asthma. I had frequent lung infections and was on numerous courses of antibiotics and steroids. I also developed a heart rate problem. I went from being able to run half marathons and cycling 50miles at a time, to not being able to even run a block.

Now, I not only have asthma, but it has progressed to COPD. I'm down to 67% lung capacity. COPD is a progressive disease and will eventually end my life. Even though I stopped wearing the gloves 20 years ago, my hands still have what has been described as a chemical burn. Redness, cracking and frequent bleeding. The redness ends at the glove line. I still have contact reactions when exposed to latex or any rubber based products. These exposures happen even with constant vigilance on my part.

I had to leave my career in healthcare. I know it may sound melodramatic, but my life truly has been ruined by latex. If I knew back in the early 90's that just stopping wearing the gloves wasn't enough, I would have left the medical field back then. I lost my health, my career and my financial stability.

I limit my exposure to other people because my immune system cannot fight off any illnesses I'm exposed to. Life is very lonely as a result.

Lisa

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