

Letter to the editor

The paper by Terrados et al. entitled "The presence of latex can induce false-positive skin tests in subjects tested with penicillin determinants" (1) clearly implies that contamination of the skin test solution with latex allergens from the vial stopper is the cause of the false-positive reactions.

As the manufacturer of the benzylpenicilloyl polylysine (BPO-PPL) and minor determinant mixture (MDM), we would like to draw the attention of all readers of *Allergy* to the fact that the stoppers used for both the lyophilized material and the reconstitution solution are produced from fully synthetic, halogenated butyl rubber. Furthermore, at no time during the manufacturing process are the BPO or MDM preparations exposed to any natural rubber products. The hypothesis that the skin test material is contaminated at the time of reconstitution by latex allergens from the rubber stopper is not tenable.

On the basis of RAST-inhibition data, the authors conclude that the solutions with the maximum concentrations of BPO and MDM contain trace amounts of latex (protein) equivalent to 0.3–0.03 µg/ml, 10-fold less than the supposed concentrations in amoxicillin (AX) and ampicillin (AMP) preparations.

These data appear to be contrary to those from skin testing which show that 12 and 16 latex-allergic patients had positive reactions to BPO-PPL and MDM, respectively, as opposed to only six and three to AX and AMP, although the supposed latex allergen content of the latter preparations was 10-fold higher.

We suggest that the authors reconsider their conclusions in the light of these comments, and perform further experiments to confirm the nature of the material causing inhibition in the RAST.

Reference

1. Terrados S, Blanca M, Justicia JL, Moreno F, Mayorga C. The presence of latex can induce false-positive skin tests in subjects tested with penicillin determinants. *Allergy* 1997;52:200-4.

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