Non-Latex Solution Realized for Probe Cover

With 1% of the population and 17 to 25 percent of health care workers demonstrating allergic reactions to latex, doctors and hospitals have been moving away from the material for some time. Medical Technique Inc. of Tucson, AZ, makers of microscope and equipment covers, wanted to be able to provide them an alternative with the material used in their products.

“The potential for our company was just huge,” recalls Lou Castagna, the President of MTI, “because so much of what comes in contact with patients and hospital staff is made of latex, and allergic reactions can be pretty severe, from redness, rashes, hives, itching, asthma to the most severe&#151anaphylactic shock.”

By establishing a partnership with PBM Plastics, a privately owned company based in Newport News, VA, MTI was able to capitalize on the opportunity, with its introduction of a new, non-latex, ultrasonic equipment probe cover that has just emerged from a series of successful product tests and prepares to move into full production after positive reactions.

“This product and application is perfect for our Melt-Phase forming process,” says Adam Burke, PBM’s President. “MTI needed a thin-wall, deep-draw cover, with a rigid flange that would heat seal to the equipment. And of course, product integrity and lack of seams and stress points is critical in any medical product application.”

“Equipment technicians say it’s easy to use and works for a variety of invasive and non-invasive ultrasonic procedures,” Castagna says of the probe cover, but perhaps the biggest surprise for MTI was how quickly the project moved from concept to prototype. “PBM had a very quick reaction time. We were looking for specific design features, and they got product prototypes to us in very short order—allowing us to get the project off the ground quickly.”

“Quick turnaround is one of the big benefits of Melt-Phase,” explains PBM’s Burke. “It’s really easy for us to create a sample and to go from prototype to full production. Melt-Phase is very flexible and cost-effective. We can quickly modify and create new prototypes which we did with MTI after they tested the cover and found some design modifications were needed to enable quick removal of the probe cover.”

Information: Medical Technique Inc. - www.mtidrape.com; PBM Plastics - www.pbmplastics.com.

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