

NAIL SALONS



- Nail salons are now a common feature on our high streets and their popularity is on the increase. There are health and safety hazards from cosmetic procedures on nails, affecting both the nail technician and client, which need to be controlled.








The main hazards are:

- Inhalation, ingestion and skin contact with harmful chemicals and nail dust (artificial and natural).
- Spreading bacterial, viral and fungal infections. This includes potential exposure to serious infectious diseases such as Hepatitis B/C and HIV.

So what can you do to control these hazards?

- Prohibit smoking, eating and drinking in the salon.
- Treat the natural nail, cuticle and skin around the nail with respect - any damage could lead to infection.
- Get the chemical safety data sheets from your supplier (they are free) and carry out a risk assessment.
- Use ventilated tables that exhaust to the outside. Ventilated tables should have close fitting filters, which must be replaced according to the manufacturers instructions. Ventilated tables reduce dust and chemicals in the air.
- Make sure the general ventilation in your salon is adequate. General ventilation is best if you have through ventilation from the front to the back of the premises. This reduces the amount of chemicals in the air.
- Keep chemicals in closed, marked containers and use dispenser bottles that have narrow throats or ideally have pressure sensitive bottle stops. This reduces the amount of chemicals in the air.
- Ensure that the technician and client wash and dry their hands before and after cosmetic treatment. This reduces the risk of infection.
- Follow the manufacturers instructions for using protective clothing such as paper masks, vinyl gloves etc. Wearing gloves is not a replacement for washing hands.

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- Record a relevant history from the client. The following list (which is not exhaustive and will depend upon the chemicals/procedures being used) may indicate that a cosmetic procedure should not be carried out:

-  A history of skin conditions such as dermatitis, eczema or sensitive skin.
-  A history of allergies
-  Poor skin or nail condition
-  Is the client undergoing chemotherapy or radiation treatment?
-  Has the client got an existing medical condition e.g. infection, blood disease, heart disease, haemophilia?
-  Does the client have a history of skin cancer or is the client on medication that makes the skin photosensitive? (important if the salon has ultra-violet curing equipment)
-  Is the client pregnant?

For any of the above, your client may need to seek medical advice **before** cosmetic work is carried out.

- Any equipment that has direct contact with the skin or natural nail such as files, boards, etc. should ideally be either, specific to the client, or single use and disposable. Ensure all other equipment is properly cleaned between clients – this includes: -

- cleaning the treatment table. Follow the manufacturers guidance for cleaning. This will reduce the risk of infection.
- Avoid using electric nail drills - they have been linked with increased risk of infection and damage to clients' natural nails. If you use drills, parts that come into direct contact with the natural nail, cuticle or skin must be either single use and disposable or sterilised between clients. Using a disinfection fluid is not sterilisation. If disposable tips are used the tip holder must be cleaned between clients - follow the manufacturers guidance for cleaning. This will reduce the risk of infection .
- Provide clients with a written aftercare advice leaflet.
- Use metal rubbish bins with foot operated lids and empty them each day. Put acrylic contaminated materials in a sealed bag before disposal in the bin. This reduces the amount of chemicals in the air.
- A good standard of training is vital. The Hairdressing and Beauty Industry Authority (HABIA) (www.habia.org Tel: 01302 380000) promotes nationally recognised standards. Product placement or basic trade courses are often inadequate.

This is not an exhaustive list but if you follow the above advice you can be confident that you are well on the way to having a healthy business for both staff and clients.

If you would like more information, please contact the Health and Safety Team on 01932 838383