

Stay Healthy and Safe While Giving Manicures and Pedicures Safe Practices in Nail Salons

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Potential Health Hazards in Nail Salon

- Chemical hazards- chemicals in nail products
- Biological hazards- bacterial and fungal infections, blood borne pathogens (hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and HIV)
- Ergonomic hazards- poor workstation design, repetitive movements
- Safety hazards- fire hazard (flammable liquids)

Hazardous chemicals found in nail salon products

- Solvents in nail polish and remover: Acetone, Ethyl acetate, Butyl acetate, Ethyl alcohol, Toluene etc.
- Acrylic artificial nail liquid: Ethyl methacrylate, Isobutyl methacrylate, etc.
- Acrylic artificial nail primer: Methyl ethyl ketone, Methacrylic acid, etc.
- Nail hardeners: Formaldehyde, Dibutyl phthalate, Tosylamide Formaldehyde Resin etc.

How can chemicals get inside our body?

- Eyes
- Breathing
- Mouth
- Skin

What can solvent vapor and dust do to you?

- Respiratory/throat (solvents, dust) - Coughing, irritation, induced and/or worsen asthma symptoms
- Central nervous system(solvents)- Light headed, nausea, headache, difficulty concentrating
- Skin- Defatting (solvents), irritation (solvents & fine dust)

Health risk of chemical hazard exposures depends on...

- What product and how much you use
- How many hours you work per day, per week, per year
- How effective the ventilation system is in your nail salon
- Not all chemicals affect your body the same way
- Different people react to the same chemical differently
- Most health effects are only temporary if the exposures are not too high
- Effects and symptoms usually go away once the exposure is stopped

Where to get more information about chemicals in nail products?

You can get product information on packaging, or in printed materials delivered with the product such as its material safety data sheet.

- Product labels- name and address of manufacturer or distributor, type and use of product, facts of product, warning and caution statements
- Safety Data Sheets(SDS)- hazardous ingredients in the products, how can it be exposed to, health and safety risk, how to handle and store chemicals properly, what to do for emergency

OSHA Requires that Product manufacturers must

provide salon owners with material safety data sheets (MSDS) for the products they buy that contain hazardous chemicals.

Salon owners must

- Make SDS available to workers
- Train workers so that they can understand chemical potential hazards and use the products safety

OSHA recently updated its rules about safety data sheet requirements. “Material Safety Data Sheets” will now be called “Safety Data Sheets”(SDS). will generally list the same information as MSDSs, but all information will now be presented in the common format across products. This can help you compare the differences in hazards between products.

Biological Hazards

- You can be exposed to infectious agents
 - If you come into contact with infected blood from co-worker or client
 - If you touch a client’s infected skin or use equipment that has not been cleaned

Keep Safe Work Practices to Avoid Regular and Accidental Exposures

- Store chemicals in small bottles with small openings and label them with the information from the manufacturer’s label.
- Close bottles tightly when you are not using them so the product does not spill or get into the air.
- Use metal trashcans with tight, self-closing lids to keep the nail products soaked on cotton balls and other trash from evaporating and getting into the salon’s air.
 - Put cotton balls and other soaked materials into the trash cans immediately.
 - If you do not have metal trashcans with self closing lids, put cotton balls and soaked materials in a sealed bag before putting them in the trash covered.
 - Empty trashcans often and remove from the work area to the outside garbage at the end of each day.
- Use only the amount of product you need to perform services. When possible, do not keep extra products at a work station.
- Follow instructions for safely disposing of used chemicals. DO NOT pour them down your sink or toilet, throw them on the ground or down outside drains, or pour them onto cotton balls.
 - Some chemicals must be disposed of in a specific way. For example, used liquid acetone must be saved in a fire department approved metal container and disposed of as hazardous waste.
- Wash your hands before eating, drinking, putting on cosmetics, and smoking.

- When you have a break, go outside to get some fresh air. This will give you a chance to get away from chemicals in the salon's air.
- Keep food and drinks covered at all times, and so not store or eat food in work areas.

Keep Products Off of Skin and Out of Eyes

- Wear long-sleeved shirts to protect your arms and pants or skirts that are at least knee-length to protect your lap from acrylic nail and other dusts.
- Wash your hands before and after working on clients; before eating, drinking, putting on cosmetics or smoking; and after handling or transferring products.
- Wear goggles and the appropriate type of disposable gloves when handling and transferring products. For example, nitrile gloves (usually blue or purple) protect against many chemicals used in nail salon products, but latex or vinyl gloves are appropriate when handling acetone.
- Replace gloves immediately if there are cuts, tears, or holes in them.
- Cover and protect cuts or cracks in your skin. Damaged skin can increase chemical absorption and exposure.
- Do not continue to use a product if you see signs of skin irritation.
 - If your hands are red and irritated, make sure your gloves are the right type for the product you are using.

Report any health problems you think are from the products you use in the workplace to your employer and doctor. Employers must follow up on reports of health problems from workers.

Steps you can take to protect your health

- Choose safer products that contain least hazardous ingredients, no Methacrylic acid (banned in NYS)
- Maintain good ventilation in salon
- Safe work practices
- Personal protective equipment(N95, N95 with charcoal film, gloves, protective eyewear)

Steps you can take to prevent Biological exposures

- Avoid touching any blood or bodily fluid
- Wear gloves and throw away the used disposable gloves
- Always wash your hands with soap and water before and after working with clients
- Clean and disinfect tools, foot basins, and spas after each client according to NY State Cosmetology Board's rules
- Consider getting immunized against hepatitis B

Preventing Aches and Pain

1. Steps you can take to reduce these hazards
 - **Use an adjustable chair** Sit so that your feet are flat on the floor and your back is supported. Use a footrest if your feet do not touch the floor when sitting.
 - **Make sure there is enough space** between the back of your knees and the front edge of your seat to improve blood flow to your legs.
 - **Adjust the lighting** Good lighting can help you see without having to bend over.
 - **Raise the clients' hand or foot** Use a cushion to raise the client's hand or foot so you do not have to bend over as far.

- **Use safety glasses with magnifying lenses** These glasses reduce the need for you to bend over to see the client's hand or foot.
- **Put a towel or foam pad** on the table edge to soften it for hands, arms, wrists, and elbows.
- **Put soft pads on tools** to make handles larger and easier to hold.
- **Take frequent breaks if possible;** changing positions and doing a different task is also helpful.
- **Pace your work** When you work too fast, your body can become tense, which could cause muscle pain.
- **Do gentle stretching exercises** like the ones on the following page, in between sessions with clients. You may need to check with your doctor first!

2. Stretching exercises you can do to reduce aches and pains

➤ **Neck**

Keeping your arms and shoulders loose

- Tilt your head to one side for 2 seconds
- Tilt your head to the other side for 2 seconds

Keeping your arms and shoulders loose and your head facing straight forward:

- Tuck your chin for 2 seconds

Keeping your arms and shoulders loose:

- Turn your head to one side for 2 seconds
- Turn your head to the other side for 2 seconds

➤ **Fingers**

Stretch your fingers out and hold for 8 seconds. Relax.

Make a claw with your hands and hold for 8 seconds. Relax.

➤ **Shoulders and Upper back**

Put one hand on your shoulder and look the opposite way. Pull your elbow in and up with the other hand.

- Hold for 2 seconds

➤ **Lower Back and Hips**

Lean forward keeping your neck relaxed and your head down.

- Hold for 8 seconds while breathing slowly
- Use your hands to push yourself up.

➤ **Back of Legs**

Place your hands shoulder width apart on a wall or table.

- Bend your knees, keep hips directly above your feet, and lower head between arms

➤ **Inner Thighs**

With your feet wide apart, place both hands on your left knee. Bend the knee until you can feel the stretch.

- Hold for 8 seconds

➤ **Shoulders**

Lace your fingers and stretch your arms with your palms facing out:

- Hold for 2 seconds

➤ **Ankles**

While holding onto a table or wall for balance, put one foot out and:

- Point your toe up and down

- Draw circles with your foot

Your Rights as a Worker

1. What is the difference between an Employee and an Independent Contractor for purpose of the Occupational Safety and Health Act?
 - It doesn't matter how much an individual is labels by the salon owner. Instead, courts and agencies will look at a list of factors to determine whether you are an employee or an independent contractor.
 - For example, if you: rent a station at a salon; purchase your own supplies and tools; have your own customers and set your own schedule and appointments; set your own rate and are paid by customers directly; and have your own business license, you may be more likely to be considered an independent contractor.
 - However, if: the owner sets your work schedule; you are paid by the hour; the owner or receptionist makes the appointments for all the workers; you do not rent the space; the owner sets the rates paid by customers; and you use the owner's tools and equipment, you may be more likely to be considered an employee.
2. Why does it matter?
 - Employers must provide protection against workplace hazards for their employees; independent contractors are responsible for their own occupational health and safety protection. Employees also have rights to a minimum wage, workers' compensation, and other benefits. Independent contractors do not.
 - Just because a salon owner tells you that you are an independent contractor, it does not mean that you are one. Just because an owner gives you an IRS form 1099 instead of a W-2 does not mean that you are an independent contractor. Salons sometimes misclassify the employment status of their workers to bypass taking protective safety and health measures, and to also deny benefits. That is why it is important for you to know the difference between what constitutes an employee and an independent contractor. If you need help, you can contact OSHA at 1-800-321-OSHA (6742).

You have the right to a safe workplace

You have the right to a safe workplace. The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (OSH Act) was passed to prevent workers from being killed or seriously harmed at work. The law requires employers to provide their employees with working conditions that are free of known dangers. The Act created the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), which sets and enforces protective workplace safety and health standards. OSHA also provides information, training and assistance to workers and employers. Workers may file a complaint to have OSHA inspect their workplace if they believe that their employer is not following OSHA standards or that there are serious hazards.

What are my rights as a worker?

You have the right to working conditions that do not put you at risk of serious harm.

OSHA also provides you with the right to:

- Ask OSHA to inspect your workplace;

- Receive information and training about hazards, methods to prevent harm, and the OSHA standards that apply to your workplace. The training must be in a language you can understand;
- Get copies of test results done to find and measure hazards in your workplace;
- Review records of work-related injuries and illnesses;
- Get copies of your medical records;
- File a complaint asking OSHA to inspect your workplace if you believe there is a serious hazard or that your employer is not following the OSHA rules. You can file a complaint [online](#); [download the form](#) and mail or fax it to the nearest OSHA office; or call 1-800-321-OSHA (6742). When requested, OSHA will keep all identities confidential; and
- Use your rights under the law without retaliation or discrimination. Your employer cannot fire or punish you if you file a complaint. **It is a violation of the Act for an employer to fire, demote, transfer or discriminate in any way against a worker for filing a complaint or using other OSHA rights.**

For more information on workers' rights, employer responsibilities, and other OSHA services, visit OSHA's website at www.osha.gov and OSHA's Workers page at www.osha.gov/workers.html.

OSHA standards: Protection on the Job

OSHA standards are rules that describe the methods that employers must use to protect their employees from hazards. There are OSHA standards for [Construction](#) work, [Agriculture](#), [Maritime](#) operations, and [General Industry](#), which are the standards that apply to most worksites. These standards limit the amount of hazardous chemicals workers can be exposed to, require the use of certain safe practices and equipment, and require employers to monitor hazards and keep records of workplace injuries and illnesses. **Employers** must also comply with the [General Duty Clause](#) of the OSH Act, which requires employers to keep their workplace free of serious recognized hazards.

Employer Responsibilities

Employers have the responsibility to provide a safe workplace. **Employers MUST provide their employees with a workplace that does not have serious hazards and follow all relevant OSHA safety and health standards.** Employers must find and correct safety and health problems. OSHA further requires employers to try to eliminate or reduce hazards first by making changes in working conditions rather than just relying on masks, gloves, ear plugs or other types of personal protective equipment (PPE). Switching to safer chemicals, enclosing processes to trap harmful fumes, or using ventilation systems to clean the air are examples of effective ways to get rid of or minimize risks.

Employers **MUST** also:

- Inform employees about hazards through training, labels, alarms, color-coded systems, [chemical information sheets](#) and other methods.
- Keep accurate records of work-related [injuries and illnesses](#).
- Perform tests in the workplace, such as air sampling required by some OSHA standards.
- Provide hearing exams or other medical tests required by OSHA standards.

- Post OSHA citations, injury and illness data, and the OSHA poster in the workplace where workers will see them.
- Notify OSHA within 8 hours of a workplace incident in which there is a death or when three or more workers go to a hospital.
- **Not discriminate or retaliate against a worker for using their rights under the law.**

You Cannot be Punished or Discriminated against for using your OSHA Rights

The OSH Act protects workers who complain to their employer, OSHA or other government agencies about unsafe or unhealthful working conditions in the workplace or environmental problems. You cannot be transferred, denied a raise, have your hours reduced, be fired, or punished in any other way because you used any right given to you under the OSHA Act. Help is available from OSHA for whistleblowers. If you have been punished or discriminated against for using your rights, you must file a complaint with OSHA within 30 days of the alleged reprisal for most complaints. No form is required, but you must send a letter or call the OSHA Area Office nearest you to report the discrimination (within 30 days of the alleged discrimination).

What to do if there is a Dangerous Situation at Work

If you believe working conditions are unsafe or unhealthful, OSHA recommends that you bring the conditions to your employer's attention, if possible. You may file a complaint with OSHA concerning a hazardous working condition at any time. However, you should not leave the worksite merely because you have filed a complaint. If the condition clearly presents a risk of death or serious physical harm, there is not sufficient time for OSHA to inspect, and, where possible, you have brought the condition to the attention of your employer, you may have a legal right to refuse to work in a situation in which you would be exposed to the hazard.

Sources: “Stay Healthy and Safe While Giving Manicures and Pedicures: A Guide for Nail Salon Workers” and www.osha.gov

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