



Chemical Hair Treatments

Chemical hair treatments include permanent waving, straightening and hair lightening/coloring. These treatments cause permanent changes to the hair.

Q Who is licensed to perform these services?

A In California, only licensed cosmetologists and barbers working in State-licensed salons or barbershops may perform chemical hair treatments.

Q What should I do if I am considering having a chemical hair treatment?

A When considering having a chemical hair treatment, ask the cosmetologist/barber to do a pretest. A pretest can help determine how your hair will react to the chemicals used and whether you can get your desired result. Be sure to ask the cosmetologist/barber in advance if there is a charge for a pretest.

Q What are the different types of pretests?

A Some types of pretests include:

1. Preliminary test curl: this test is performed for permanent wave services. It can indicate actual processing time and curl results based on the curler size and product used.
2. Strand test: this test is performed for hair coloring services. It can determine processing time, color result, and whether the hair is able to withstand the effects of the chemical being used.

Q Am I protected during a chemical hair treatment?

A Yes, for all chemical hair treatments, a towel and/or other sanitary neck strip must be used to keep the protective covering (e.g., shampoo cape, drape, smock, etc.) from directly touching the skin.

Q What will happen if the chemical solution gets on me?

A Immediately remove the chemical solution from the skin. Be sure to tell your cosmetologist/barber immediately if you feel chemicals dripping on your skin or if you begin to feel a burning sensation.

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Q Can the strong odor from the chemicals hurt me?

A Salons and barbershops should have adequate ventilation. If a chemical odor causes you any discomfort, immediately inform your cosmetologist/barber.

Q Should I wait to shampoo my hair after having a chemical treatment?

A Yes, you must wait before shampooing your hair after having a chemical treatment because it is critical that the hair be allowed to adjust to the permanent changes. Be sure to listen to your cosmetologist's/barber's advice and wait the specified number of hours or days before shampooing your hair. This will help to avoid severely damaging it.

