



Infection Control in the Salon

Many of us visit barbershops or cosmetology establishments hundreds, if not thousands, of times during our lives, whether for trims, perms, or more “colorful” nail or hair services. When we do, our health depends on the safety and infection control procedures used by the barbers and cosmetologists to whom we entrust the care of our hair, skin, and nails.

Risks associated with the transmission of dangerous bacterium or viruses within the salon could present a very real and dangerous threat to an unaware consumer.

The Board of Barbering and Cosmetology (Board) would like consumers to be aware that diseases and/or health problems can be transmitted through client contact, contaminated utensils and/or improper disinfection procedures.

To protect yourself from possible contamination, the Board recommends you make sure your licensed professional washes his or her hands before he or she begins your requested service.

Ask your licensed professional how his/her tools were disinfected. The proper procedure for disinfecting tools is as follows:

- The tool must first be washed with soap and water.
- Then, it must be immersed in an EPA-registered disinfectant (with demonstrated bactericidal, fungicidal, and virucidal activity) for the manufacturers recommended time, usually about 10-15 minutes.
- The disinfected tool must be stored in a clean, closed, labeled container. It should be labeled “clean” on the outside of the container, for easy identification by you, the client.
- If the item cannot be disinfected, such as a cotton ball, nail file or buffer, it must be immediately thrown away after use. Please do not ask your professional for these items. Law requires they be thrown out for your protection.

If your licensed professional hesitates to explain the proper disinfection requirements or simply doesn't know them, take your business elsewhere. Your health is too important to risk.

If you notice your licensed professional is sick with a cold or flu, try to reschedule your appointment. Don't run the risk of exposure.

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BLOOD EXPOSURE IN THE SALON

Occasionally, an accident can occur in the salon, such as an ear nip by the shears or a nick from a razor, which can expose you to blood contact. The Board recommends you exercise extreme caution when this situation occurs. You may wish to do the following:

- Ask for a tissue or cotton ball to stop the bleeding.
- Wash your wound with soap and water.
- Report the incident to the salon's owner or supervisor.
- If necessary, seek medical treatment.

If you notice your licensed professional has open wounds/cuts/sores or rashes on his/her hands or face, ask the licensed professional to put on gloves before they begin offering you services. Don't run the risk of spreading infectious disease.

NEVER VISIT AN UNLICENSED SALON

Unregulated shops tend to avoid the costs in both supplies and time that correct disinfection takes and you may not even know the difference until a problem develops. To see if the establishment is licensed by the Board, go to: **www.breeze.ca.gov** or call 800-952-5210.

Let's work together for a safe, healthy salon experience.

