

Hairdressing & Barbering

Infection Prevention and Control Information for Operators

What is the Health Risk?

Instruments and equipment used for hairdressing and barbering may become contaminated with blood or body fluid that contains blood-borne infections such as hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV. Other infections, such as fungal or bacterial infections, may occur if equipment is not properly cleaned and disinfected.

You do not have to see blood or body fluids on instruments, equipment or on surfaces for an infection to occur.

Protect Yourself

- Wash hands well before and after each client. Use liquid soap under warm running water and then dry with a disposable paper towel.
- Alcohol-based hand rubs may be used as an alternative to hand washing if hands are not visibly soiled.
- Disposable blades must be discarded immediately after use into an approved sharps container labeled “biohazard.”
- Keep your vaccinations up-to-date:
 - Hepatitis B vaccine – 3 doses
 - Tetanus vaccine – every 10 years
 - Influenza vaccine – every year

Protect Your Clients

- Use a sanitary neck strip or a towel between the client’s skin and the shampoo cape or cutting cloth. Throw away neck strip or launder the towel between clients.
- Scissors, hair clippers and hair texturing equipment used for cutting hair must be cleaned and disinfected using a low-level disinfectant between clients.
- Combs and hairbrushes must be cleaned with soap and water between clients.
- A low-level disinfectant can be used on combs and hairbrushes. Do not store combs and brushes in the disinfectant.
- Scissors that accidentally come into contact with blood must be cleaned and then disinfected using a high-level disinfectant.
- Electric, non-disposable hair clippers must be disassembled (if possible), cleaned with a brush and disinfected with a low-level disinfectant after each client.

- Hair rollers and perm curlers must be cleaned with soap and water between uses. A low-level disinfectant can be used after cleaning.
- Headrests, chairs, worktables and work surfaces must be cleaned between clients and then disinfected using a low-level disinfectant at least once a day or when visibly soiled.
- Crochet hooks used for cap highlights must be cleaned and disinfected using an intermediate- to high-level disinfectant between each client.
- Needles used for hair weaves and extensions that come in contact with the client must be thrown out in an approved sharps container immediately after contact.
- All razor blades used for shaving skin (face, neck, sideburns, etc.) must be **single-use and discarded in an approved sharps container immediately after use.**
- The handle and cradle of the razor, which holds the blade in place, must be cleaned and disinfected with an intermediate- or high-level disinfectant between each client. See **Disinfection of Instruments and Equipment** chart.
- A straight razor with a fixed blade (all in one piece) is not recommended. If used, it must be cleaned and sterilized between uses. See **Sterilization Information** sheet.
- Styptic pencils cannot be used to stop bleeding on clients. Powder or liquid forms are acceptable if applied with a disposable applicator.
- Keep accidental blood exposure records on site for a minimum of one year, and on file for a minimum of five years. Records must include the following information:
 - First and last name of person exposed
 - Address and phone number of person exposed
 - First and last name of personal service worker involved
 - Date of injury
 - Site of injury
 - Circumstances surrounding incident
 - How equipment was cleaned and disinfected following incident
 - Action taken

**For more information please contact the Infectious Disease Control Team at
519-663-5317 ext. 2330 or go to www.healthunit.com**

Source:

Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. (2009). *Infection prevention and control best practices for personal services settings*. Retrieved from http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/pubhealth/oph_standards/ophs/progstds/pdfs/pssp_2008.pdf

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