

AESTHETIC MANICURES AND PEDICURES

Manicures include a variety of procedures on a person's fingernails/hands, while pedicures include a variety of procedures on a person's toenails/feet. Procedures include the application and removal of nail polish and artificial nails, paraffin treatments, nail filing, buffing and shaping, as well as pushing back, softening and removing calluses.

These procedures involve the use of various single-use and reusable instruments such as nail files, cuticle sticks, nail clippers/nippers and scissors.

INFECTION RISKS

Manicures and pedicures can lead to infection through open wounds from a variety of procedures such as cutting of the skin/cuticles and scrubbing of the skin. This may allow disease-causing microorganisms (e.g., bacteria, fungus, or viruses) to enter the body. Infections can spread from:

- Contaminated equipment
- Improper cleaning and disinfection of equipment
- Contaminated environment
- Client's own bacteria on the skin
- Unclean hands touching the treated area

Additional Infection Risks:

- Footbaths, which are a small tubs that are used to soak a client's feet during a pedicure, have been linked to infections in the toe's nail bed, and outbreaks of certain bacteria, like mycobacteria
- Electric tools, used to file or shape nails, for both manicures and pedicures, can release tiny particles into the air, including fungus and body fluids, which might increase the risk of respiratory infections

INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL REQUIREMENTS

Equipment:

- All tools, instruments and equipment are to be stored and maintained in a sanitary way (e.g., in a clean, covered container) when not in use
- Single-use instruments and equipment (e.g., disposable emery boards, buffers, toe separators and foam flip flops) are to be discarded after use
- All reusable equipment/instruments/items (e.g., glass/diamond/metal nail files, nippers, clippers) are to be cleaned and disinfected after each use

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- Pedicure blades (e.g., credo blades) are not recommended as these can cause cuts to the client's skin and increase the risk of infection
- If pedicure blades are used, these are to be used once on a single client and discarded into an approved sharps container that is located at/near the point of service
- Creams, oils and paraffin wax are to be dispensed in such a way that the original portion does not become contaminated (i.e., no double-dipping)
- Only single-use styptic products are to be used. These must be discarded after each client. Multi-use styptic pencils are not to be used. Powder or liquid forms of styptic are acceptable if these are applied using a disposable applicator

Operational Requirements:

- Operators are to advise clients to avoid shaving their lower legs for 24 hours before a pedicure to avoid skin abrasion (cuts or scrapes), which can increase the risk of infection
- Prior to service, operators are to examine the client's nails and skin for signs of infection
- Operators are not to provide nail services to a client who has signs of a nail infection. The operator is to advise the client to see their doctor for assessment and treatment
- Operators are not to provide treatment to clients or apply any fungal ointment to the client's skin. Fungal ointment should not be on-site
- Operators should clean their hands before the procedure and wear gloves based on a risk assessment
- Before manicure services, operators are to ask clients to clean their hands using 70%-90% alcohol-based hand rub (hand sanitizer) if hands are not visibly soiled, or using soap and water if hands are visibly soiled
- Before pedicure services, operators are to clean the client's feet
- Operators are not to use nail adhesives containing methyl methacrylate (MMA) as it is not permitted for use in Canada
- Operators are to avoid breaking the client's skin, especially when cutting cuticles or filing the nails. Ideally, cuticles are to be left intact to reduce potential exposure to infectious agents
- If skin is broken accidentally during a service, operators are to record details of the incident

DIRECTION FOR CLEANING AND DISINFECTION OF VARIOUS HAND AND FOOT TUBS OR FOOT BASINS

Soak Tubs or Basins with Recirculation:

Soak tubs or basins with recirculation (e.g., footbaths, foot thrones, pedicure chairs or tubs that are connected to plumbing and fitted with water jets) are to be drained and thoroughly cleaned and disinfected according to the manufacturer's instructions for use after each client. This includes all surfaces, filters, screens and the recirculation system.

If the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and disinfecting the recirculation system are not available, the following are to be completed after each client:

1. Drain the tub and thoroughly clean all surfaces with water, detergent and a scrubbing brush
2. Remove, dismantle, clean and disinfect any filters or screens that are not in the piping (e.g., magnet screens) with an intermediate-level disinfectant. Replace these after cleaning and disinfection

3. Fill the tub with detergent and warm water to above the fill line and turn on the recirculation system. Let it run for five minutes. Drain the tub and rinse with clean water to remove any left-over detergent
4. Use an intermediate-level disinfectant according to the manufacturer's instructions for use. If bleach is used, a concentration of 1,000 ppm is sufficient ([Preparing Household Bleach as a Disinfectant](#))
5. Fill the tub or basin with disinfectant solution to above the level of the jets. Ensure that the disinfectant is diluted according to the manufacturer's instructions for use (if applicable)
6. Turn on the recirculation system and allow it to run for the contact time specified in the manufacturer's instructions for use. If a bleach and water solution is used for disinfection, ensure a 10 minute contact time
7. After the system has run for the specified contact time, drain the disinfectant solution
8. If rinsing after disinfection is recommended by the manufacturer's instructions for use, fill the tub or basin with warm water to above the level of the jets and run the system for a few minutes
9. Drain and dry the tub or basin before use by the next client

Also, at the end of each day:

10. Clean, disinfect and dry all cleaning and disinfection supplies (e.g., brushes, cloths, rags) and store these away from sterile supplies (if applicable)
11. Remove, dismantle, clean and disinfect any filters or screens in the piping (i.e., those that require a screwdriver to remove) using an intermediate-level disinfectant

Soak Tubs or Basins without Recirculation:

Soak tubs or basins without recirculation are those that are manually filled and drained and do not have the ability to recirculate water. Reusable tubs or basins are to be made of materials that are non-porous and able to be cleaned and disinfected. Those made of stainless steel may be preferred over plastic. For basins or tubs that are not easily cleaned and disinfected, it may be possible to use a disposable, single-use liner during the soak procedure or service.

If a single-use disposable liner is not used, after each client:

1. Empty the tub/basin and thoroughly clean all surfaces with water, detergent and a scrubbing brush
2. Rinse the tub/basin with clean water to remove any leftover detergent solution
3. Disinfect the tub/basin using a level of disinfection appropriate for the intended use:
 - Tubs or basins used for hand soaks (e.g., manicures bowls) require low-level disinfection, at a minimum
 - Tubs or basins used for foot soaks (e.g., footbaths, pedicure bowls) require intermediate-level disinfection, at a minimum
4. Drain and dry the tub/basin before reuse or storage

If a single-use disposable liner is used, after each client:

1. Dispose of the liner
2. Inspect the tub/basin for any signs of contamination (e.g., signs of a tear or opening in the liner)

3. If there are no signs of contamination, place a new liner in the tub/basin, and clean and disinfect the tub/basin with a low-level disinfectant at the end of the day
4. If there are signs that the tub/basin was contaminated (e.g., visible liquid in the basin after removing the liner), clean and disinfect the tub/basin before the next client use
 - A low-level disinfectant is to be used if the tub/basin was used for hand soaks
 - An intermediate-level disinfectant is to be used if the tub/basin was used for foot soaks
5. Dry the tub/basin following cleaning and disinfection and before reuse or storage

REMINDER:

Procedures involving live aquatic species such as Garra Rufa (doctor) fish are prohibited as these cannot be disinfected or sterilized after use. Procedures involving live aquatic species are not to be sold, offered for sale or provided to clients.

Reprocessing Classification

High-Level Disinfection	Intermediate-Level Disinfection	Low-Level Disinfection	Single-Use, Disposable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grater-style foot files 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acrylic tip cutter Cuticle scissors, nippers, pushers, scrapers and cutters Diamond drill bit for acrylic nails Foot files with removable adhesive/abrasive stickers or metal foot files Metal, diamond or glass nail files Nail-cleaner scoops Pedicure bowl, recirculating foot tub or footbath Reusable metal rotary tool bit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Callus blade (credo blade) holders Metal rotary tool handle Flip flops or slippers for multiple-client use (may be laundered if applicable: i.e., cloth slippers, not foam slippers) Manicure bowls and trays Nail-drying stations, tables Tweezers for applying nail art UV and LED curing lights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abrasive pads for removing calluses Bags used for paraffin wax treatments Callus blades (credo blades) Buffing blocks Rotary tool sanding bands Emery boards (paper or foam) Foam flip flops/toe separators Orange or wood sticks Paraffin wax and waxing applicators Pumice stones Single-use PPE (gloves, masks, gowns, eye protection) Sponges Tub or basin liners

SOURCES

1. Health Protection and Promotion Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.H.7; O. Reg. 136/18: Personal Service Settings
2. Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). Guide to infection prevention and control in personal service settings. 3rd ed. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2019

This fact sheet was adapted with permission from CIPHI Ontario and is based on PSS best practice recommendations, current reprocessing standards and legislation. It is not an inclusive list of all requirements. Operators are responsible to ensure that all services are offered according to local requirements, best practices and legislation.