

WAXING, SUGARING AND THREADING

Waxing, sugaring and threading are temporary forms of hair removal (i.e., epilation).

- Waxing typically involves the application of warm wax or sugar paste to a client's skin. Single-use strips may be used to aid in the removal of soft wax, while hard wax is stripped directly from skin once dry
- Sugaring involves the application of a sugar-based paste to the skin. The hardened paste is flicked off in the direction of hair growth, removing the hair and root along with the paste
- Threading involves the removal of one or more hairs from the use of a loop of thread. The thread is rapidly moved across a client's skin to trap and remove unwanted hair

INFECTION RISKS

Waxing, sugaring and threading carry a risk of infection and other unwanted side effects, such as infection of the hair follicle (folliculitis), irritant or contact dermatitis and skin irritation. Infections can be bacterial, fungal or viral. Infections can spread from:

- Single-use items such as wax applicators, waxing strips, sugaring paste, thread or roll-on wax cartridges are re-used
- Contaminated environment
- Client's own bacteria on the skin
- Unclean hands touching the treated area

The temperature of heated wax is **NOT** hot enough to kill bacteria or viruses. If the temperature of the heated wax is too high, it may result in burns to a client's skin.

INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL REQUIREMENTS

Equipment:

- Single-use, disposable applicators (e.g., spatulas, wooden sticks) are to be used if wax will be dispensed from a wax warming or melting pot
- A new single-use applicator is to be used for each wax application for every client (including for each wax application on the same client) and discarded after use
- Roll-on wax cartridges are to be treated as single-use if they are used to apply wax directly to skin
- Roll-on wax cartridges may only be reused if they are used to dispense wax onto single-use waxing strips or applicators (i.e., there is no direct contact with skin)
- If threading is performed, the thread is not to be placed in the mouth of the operator (i.e., thread is not to come into contact with saliva), which could expose clients to additional risks for infections

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- Fresh paper liner(s) or clean linen on waxing tables/beds are to be provided for each client. Used linens are to be laundered before reuse and single-use disposable paper liners are to be discarded after use
- Lotions, oils and skin antiseptic are to be dispensed in way that ensures the remaining product does not get contaminated (e.g., use of pump bottles to dispense bulk-supplied product)
- All reusable equipment/instruments/items are to be reprocessed after use
- Items that are not able to be reprocessed are to be discarded after use (e.g., roller head wax applicators, lancets, needles, eyebrow threading thread)

Operational Requirements:

- The service provider checks the client's skin for open cuts, wounds, and signs of infection. If found, service is refused
- Operators are to inform clients about the risks of waxing when taking anti-acne medication, as this may increase risk of infection by damaging the skin and potentially removing the epidermis (top layer of the skin)
- Operators are to perform hand hygiene before and after each waxing procedure, in between breaks in service and before putting on or after removing gloves
- Operators are to clean and disinfect a client's skin with a skin antiseptic before waxing

Reprocessing Classification

High-Level Disinfection	Intermediate-Level Disinfection	Low-Level Disinfection	Single-Use, Disposable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tweezers used to expose ingrown hairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tweezers used to remove hair from the hair follicle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tables, chairs, beds • Scissors used to cut single-use wax strips or eyebrow-threading threads • Magnifying glasses • Service trays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-use personal protective equipment (gloves) • Waxing applicator sticks • Roller head (roll-on) wax applicators • Wax strips • Eyebrow-threading threads • Lancets and needles used to remove ingrown hairs* • Paper used to cover the waxing bed/table • Unused, decanted wax/sugaring product • Applicators used to apply facial powder prior to threading • Cotton balls • Paper undergarments • Unused, dispensed lotion or aftercare products

*These items are to be sterile before use

SOURCES

1. 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
2. Barn P. Waxing promising practices fact sheet [Internet]. Vancouver, BC: National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health; 2010 [cited 2018 May 18]. Available from: http://www.ncceh.ca/sites/default/files/Waxing_Fact_Sheet_Sept_2010.pdf

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.