



# WorkSafe SmartMove Certificate

## Hairdressing, Nail Care and Beauty Industry Module Study Guide





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# Hairdressing, Nail Care and Beauty Industry

## Learning outcomes

In this module you will:

1. Learn about common hazards encountered in the hairdressing, nail care and beauty industry
2. Understand how to prevent injuries from common workplace hazards
3. Learn about chemical hazards and how to handle and use chemicals safely
4. Identify existing and potential hazards at a workplace and learn how to report and record them
5. Learn how to eliminate workplace hazards and reduce risks

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The hairdressing, nail care and beauty industry offers great job opportunities for young workers. Activities in the industry usually occur in a salon and include hairdressing, nail services, barbering, beauty services, and tanning services.

General tasks may include:

- cutting and styling hair
- shampooing and conditioning hair
- colouring, straightening and permanently waving hair
- shaving, and trimming beards and moustaches
- manicures and pedicures
- applying face treatments and makeup
- cleaning salon and work areas, and sterilising equipment.

Working in this industry may expose young and inexperienced workers to many potential hazards. These can include:

- sprain and strain from having an awkward posture, repetitive movements and prolonged standing
- health factors, such as fatigue
- cuts from using clippers, scissors and razors
- burns from contact with heating equipment such as curling or straightening irons
- broken bones and soft tissue injuries from slips, trips and falls
- skin irritation, allergic reactions, and dermatitis from skin coming into contact with chemicals in hair colours, nail polish, nail glues and nail varnish or use of latex gloves
- respiratory issues from inhaling toxic chemical fumes and nail dust which can aggravate asthma in people who have this disease; workers can also develop occupational asthma if they become immunologically sensitised to the chemicals used
- biological hazards, such as exposure to blood and infectious diseases from unwell clients.
- electric shocks

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## Manual tasks

Manual tasks are any activities or sequence of activities that require a person to use their physical body (musculoskeletal system) to perform work.

Most jobs require several types of manual tasks to be performed. However, not all manual tasks are hazardous. The most common injuries and health issues that can arise from performing hazardous manual tasks are musculoskeletal injuries, which affect muscles, bones and joints.

Examples of musculoskeletal injuries are:

- sprains and strains of muscles, ligaments and tendons (e.g. back, neck and shoulder strain)
- joint injuries
- nerve injury or compression



- muscular and vascular disorders (e.g. carpal tunnel syndrome or repetitive strain injury from repetitive movements)
- soft tissue injuries.

## How does performing a manual task result in injury?

Contrary to popular belief, it's not just lifting heavy objects that creates the risk of musculoskeletal injuries. Working in a standing position for long periods of time and on a regular basis can cause sore feet, swelling of the legs, general muscular fatigue, lower back pain, stiffness in the neck and shoulders. Working with elevated arms above shoulder level for a prolonged period may also cause shoulder disorders or persistent severe pain.

Workers are at risk of suffering injuries due to:

- increased effort (force) such as maintaining a forceful grip while using scissors when the wrist is permanently held in a non-neutral position
- awkward postures, such as bending forward or twisting the spine while washing or cutting hair for an extended period
- applying pressure on one part of the body such as leaning over a work table cutting, filing and buffing nails for extended periods
- sustained and prolonged standing from performing hairdressing tasks or prolonged sitting from manicuring and pedicuring.

Manual tasks that result in musculoskeletal injuries are considered to be hazardous manual tasks.

## Let's have a look at how to stay safe

Your employer has a responsibility to provide and maintain a safe workplace. If you are about to perform manual tasks that may become hazardous and you are unsure how to go about it, ask your employer for assistance.

Your employer should provide you with **\*risk management** and **\*\*task specific training** where hazardous manual tasks have been identified at your workplace.

*\*Risk management refers to the steps taken to manage workplace hazards described as **SAMM** – **S**pot the hazard, **A**ssess the risk, **M**ake the changes, **M**onitor and follow-up.*

*\*\*Task-specific training is the practising of actual tasks that will be performed.*

Task-specific training should be provided to you:

- during induction to a new task
- as part of refresher training
- when work tasks are about to be changed or new ones introduced.

After the training, you should be able to:

- recognise the risks and the sources of those risks and, in discussion with your employer, decide the best way to minimise them
- use relevant mechanical aids and handling devices provided to you
- use tools or equipment provided to you safely.

## How can you do to prevent injury from hazardous manual tasks?

- Wear comfortable footwear with a low heel. If you are standing on a metal or cement floor, the foot should be cushioned with a shock-absorbing insole. Shoes need to be wide enough to leave room to move toes and should have arch supports to prevent flattening of the feet, and a heel with a firm grip to prevent slipping.
- Use a seat whenever possible while working, or at least during rest breaks.
- Avoid bending and stretching by adjusting client chairs up or down where possible.
- Maintain good posture that includes straight back and shoulders when bending from the knees.



- When working in a standing position, always face what you are working on, with your body close to the work to avoid twisting.
- Avoiding over-reaching behind or above the shoulder level, or beyond the point of what is comfortable.

**Remember:**

*There is risk if manual tasks are not carried out correctly. Many manual tasks performed in a salon may become hazardous manual tasks.*

*Your employer has a responsibility to provide you with task specific training.*

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## Quiz – Manual tasks

1. The most common health problems that can arise from hazardous manual tasks are:
    - a. musculoskeletal injuries
    - b. cold and flu
    - c. bone cancer
    - d. food allergies
  2. When should you receive task specific training to perform manual tasks?
    - a. During induction to the task.
    - b. As part of refresher training.
    - c. When work tasks are about to be changed or introduced.
    - d. All of the above.
  3. What can be identified as a hazardous manual task in a salon?  
(Select **three** that apply)
    - a. Prolonged standing on hard concrete floors to perform tasks.
    - b. Leaning over a work table cutting, filing and buffing nails for extended periods.
    - c. Twisting of the spine while washing or cutting hair for an extended period.
    - d. Shampooing and conditioning hair.
  4. What you should NOT do when working in a standing position for long periods of time and on a regular basis?
    - a. Wear high heels.
    - b. Use a seat whenever possible while working, or at least during rest breaks.
    - c. Always face what you are working on, with your body close to the work.
    - d. Avoid bending and stretching by adjusting client chairs up or down where possible.
-



## Fatigue

Fatigue is the feeling of being very tired, drained and exhausted. It can result from little or poor sleep, working long hours, and doing work that is physically demanding or that requires high concentration.

Fatigue reduces your ability to perform your work safely and effectively. You may experience tiredness even after sleep, having short-term memory problems, an inability to concentrate and blurred vision or impaired visual perception. Fatigue may increase the risk of injuries and accidents and can contribute to poor health.

Causes of work-related fatigue may come from:

- working extended or irregular shifts that are longer than eight hours
- working night shifts or very early in the morning
- working at irregular times
- inadequate rest time between shifts.

### What can your employer do to reduce fatigue at the workplace?

- Provide time for a regular break.
- Have a roster that allows rest and recovery time between shifts.
- Provide a work environment that has good lighting, comfortable temperature and reasonable noise level
- Vary your tasks by adding interesting tasks throughout the shift to help reduce fatigue.
- Allow you to sit down to do some jobs, preferably on a specially designed stool or chair.

#### **Remember:**

*Under some employment awards, penalties can be incurred if staff members are not provided with the breaks that are outlined in their award.*

### What can you do to reduce fatigue?

- Have enough sleep before work – you may need at least 7 to 9 hours sleep each day.
- Take regular breaks – your employer should allow time for rest breaks depending upon the length of your shift.
- Wear low heeled, comfortable, covered shoes.
- Keep a healthy lifestyle. Have a good diet and exercise regularly.
- Avoid eating, caffeine or alcohol before bedtime.
- Talk to your employer if you think you're at risk of fatigue.

#### **Remember:**

*Late nights combined with the use of drugs and alcohol can make you feel tired the next day or damage your concentration and ability to work safely.*

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## Quiz – Fatigue

5. What can you do to reduce work-related fatigue?
  - a. Have enough sleep before work.
  - b. Avoid eating, caffeine or alcohol before bedtime.
  - c. Wear low heeled, comfortable and covered shoes to work.
  - d. All of the above.





6. What causes work-related fatigue?
    - a. Inadequate rest breaks between shifts
    - b. Working night shifts or very early in the morning
    - c. working extended or irregular shifts that are longer than 8 hours
    - d. All of the above.
- 

## Equipment and tools

Many workers in the hairdressing, nail care and beauty industry injure themselves at a workplace using the equipment and tools. The most common injuries are cuts or lacerations to the fingers from sharp tools such as scissors, razors, clippers, shears and thinning tools. Other common injuries are burns from contact with heating and heat-based equipment, such as straightening irons, styling wands and curling irons.

### How can you avoid cuts?

Many cut injuries result from workers being careless or absent minded when using sharp tools.

Cut injuries can be avoided by:

- being properly trained on using equipment or tools that can cause cut and burn injuries for their first use until you are competent
- following safe work procedures. Your employer should have these procedures in place. A safe work procedure is a step-by-step description of the safest and most efficient way to perform a task
- using scissors safely. When using scissors, hold the points and pass with the handles toward the other person. When cleaning, wipe scissor blades with care away from the body and towards the point. Always carry scissors with the blade pointing downwards
- keeping your scissors and clippers sharp so they require less hand force to use. Not attempting to catch a dropped pair of scissors or sharp tools. Let them fall and then pick them up
- removing, replacing and disposing of used razor blades safely according to safe work procedures. Using them in well-lit work areas.
- focusing on the task at hand when using scissors and sharps. Stop using them if you want to look up.

### What should you do if you cut yourself?

If you cut yourself, inform your employer and seek first aid. The first aid procedures for cuts and grazes are as follows.

- Wash hands to get rid of any bacteria.
- Apply pressure to the cut.
- Wash cut with warm water and gentle soap using a gauze.
- Clean the cut with an antiseptic and cover any cuts and abrasions with waterproof dressings.
- If the cut or abrasion is on your hands while working on a client, cover the cut with waterproof dressing, then wear single-use gloves during all procedures.
- If the cut continues to bleed seek medical advice.

### How can you avoid burns?

Using defective equipment such as hair dryers that spark and not paying attention to safe work procedures (such as overheating wax) can cause burn injuries. Unintentional contact with curling or flat irons, hairdryers and steamers that may have hot surfaces, and continuous contact with excessive hot water, may also cause burns.



Burn injuries can be avoided by:

- only using equipment and heating products according to safe work procedures and manufacturer's instructions
- not using defective equipment
- making sure all equipment that produces heat is cool before cleaning
- always turning off equipment at the power supply before cleaning.

### What should you do if you get burnt?

If you burn yourself, inform your employer and seek first aid. The first aid procedures for minor burns are to:

- remove all jewellery and clothing from around the burn area. Do not remove any clothing that is stuck to the burn
  - run cool water over the burn for no more and no less than 20 minutes
  - do not apply ice or creams over the burn as this can further damage the skin
  - cover the burn loosely with cling wrap or a clean, damp, lint-free cloth
  - seek medical advice if the burn is larger than a 20 cent coin, is deep or infected, or was caused by electricity.
- 

### Quiz – Equipment and tools

7. What should you do if you receive a burn injury?
    - a. Run cool water over the burn for no more and no less than 20 minutes.
    - b. Cover the burn with a bandage.
    - c. Do not remove jewellery and clothing from around the burn area as you might lose them.
    - d. Apply ice over the burn to cool the skin.
  8. In case of an accidental cut on your hand while working on a client, what should you do?
    - a. Inform your employer and seek first aid.
    - b. Clean with antiseptic and bandage the cut with waterproof dressing.
    - c. Wear single-use gloves during all procedures.
    - d. All of the above
  9. When you drop scissors, you should always let them fall and then pick them up.
    - a. True
    - b. False
  10. Which of the following statements indicate safe use of scissors?
    - a. When using scissors, cut away from your body.
    - b. One way to reduce the amount of hand force needed for cutting is to keep your scissors sharp.
    - c. Always pass a pair of scissors handle first to another person.
    - d. All of the above.
-



## Slips, trips and falls

*A hairdressing apprentice working in a busy salon slipped on wet vinyl, fracturing her right ankle. As a result, she had several operations and was off work for a lengthy period.*

Slips, trips and falls are a common cause of injuries of young workers in the hairdressing, nail care and beauty industry. They can result in serious injuries and lengthy time off work. These types of injuries can also affect young workers in their everyday social lives and may mean they cannot engage in physical activities, hobbies and play sport.

A Slip, trip or fall may cause injuries, including:

- broken bones when colliding with an object or hitting the ground
- cuts if it occurs near sharp objects
- sprains or strains.
- burns if it occurs near hot surfaces or while handling hot liquids.

### What causes slips, trips and falls?

- Slippery floor from water or liquid spills, nail dust and clippings, hair clippings, residue from hair products or hair spray.
- Wearing unsuitable shoes.
- Unstable, loose, or uneven surfaces like broken tiles or torn carpet. Steps and different floor levels.
- Poor lighting.
- Loose cords on the floor from electrical tools, such as flat irons, blow dryers and curling irons.
- Equipment and trolleys left in the way.

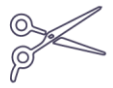
### What can your employer do to prevent slips, trips and falls?

Your employer should:

- allow for safe movement in the workplace, including entries and exits that are free of obstructions.
- ensure floors and surfaces in the workplace are well maintained and installed with task appropriate surfaces
- provide adequate lighting for safe movement
- ensure sufficient space to work
- maintain workplaces to keep them in a clean and tidy condition. Floors should be cleaned frequently, disposing of shorn hair, clipped nails and removing any residues that may make the floor slippery
- provide safe equipment and tools for you to work safely; for example, equipment with moving parts and trolleys should have breaking mechanisms to avoid accidents from unintentional movements
- ensure workers wear suitable footwear with appropriate treads that are kept clean
- provide information, instruction, training and supervision so that workers are not exposed to slip and trip hazards.

### How can you prevent slips, trips or falls at work?

- Wear suitable shoes with treads that are kept clean. Incorrect footwear can cause slips and trips.
- Remove waste and rubbish regularly from work areas. Keep your work area tidy and clean so there is nothing to slip and fall over (e.g. Power cords trailed on the floors, tangled wires and hair clippings or residuals are slip and trip hazards).
- Clean up spillages straight away and dry the floor to ensure the surface is not left wet – don't leave spills for someone else to clean up.
- Keep walkways clear of obstacles especially during busy work times.
- Put breaks on stationary trolleys to avoid unintentional movements that may cause you to slip or trip.
- Carry items only at a height that you can safely see over to avoid trip hazards and bumping into things.



- Attend training on how to prevent slips, trips and falls in your workplace.
- 

### Quiz – slips, trips and falls

11. Suitable shoes that may prevent slip and trip hazards are:
    - a. closed toe, low heeled and comfortable with treads that are kept clean
    - b. open toe, rubber soled and colourful
    - c. shoes that are well worn without tread
    - d. stylish shoes.
  12. Clean floors, keeping all work areas tidy and good lighting are important safety considerations in a beauty salon to:
    - a. ensure clients can read the magazines
    - b. reduce the risk of slips, trips and falls
    - c. make sure the salon looks uncluttered and attractive to customers
    - d. reduce the risk of backache.
  13. What can cause slips, trips and falls in the salon?
    - a. Good lighting.
    - b. Salon is well maintained and in a clean and tidy condition.
    - c. Loose cords tangled on the floor from electrical tools.
    - d. There is sufficient space to work and safe movement in the salon.
- 

## Hazardous Substances

*A young hairdresser developed contact dermatitis. Her hands were dry, red and weeping. She had become allergic to most of the chemicals used in the salon and had to change her career.*

A hazardous substance can be any substance, liquid, solid, dust or gas that may cause you harm. Poor work practices and lack of ventilation can increase the risk of exposure to hazardous substances.

In hair salons, hazardous substances may include shampoos and conditioners, hair dye, hair bleach, hairspray, and henna products.

In nail salons, hazardous substances may include polymers, monomers and solvents to apply false nails to client's fingers or to polish the client's nails. Monomers used include ethyl methacrylate (EMA) and methyl methacrylate (MMA), which can cause respiratory irritation and allergic skin reactions.

In beauty salons, hazardous substances may include brow and lash tints, chemical peels and wax solvents.

Cleaning chemicals and disinfectants are also hazardous substances commonly found in workplaces.

Hazardous substances shouldn't be a problem most of the time, but things can go wrong if you:

- get chemicals on your skin
- eat or drink them by mistake
- breathe in fine dust or chemical fumes from sprays and solutions
- mix substances so they become more harmful or toxic
- mistake one substance for another



- have pre-existing asthma or dermatitis

## Common health issues, injuries and incidents from hazardous substances

### Irritant and allergic contact dermatitis

Contact dermatitis is an inflammation that occurs when a substance comes into contact with skin. Effects of contact dermatitis on hands may have a profound impact on workers' ability to perform a job. Severe conditions can affect workers activities of daily living and can even lead to job loss.

**Irritant contact dermatitis** occurs when a physical or chemical damage to the barrier layer of skin exceeds the skin's ability to repair the damage.

**Allergic contact dermatitis** is a form of eczema caused by an allergic reaction to material, called an allergen, in contact with the skin. The skin becomes irritated and an abnormal (allergic) reaction happens. The skin may be red, swollen, tender, hot, painful or itchy. If the reaction is severe, the skin may blister or weep and can become cracked or crusty.

Frequent contact with water, chemicals in hairdressing products and cleaning chemicals or detergents are the most common factors contributing to skin damage in this industry.

### Be aware!

- There are a number of allergens which increase risks of allergic contact dermatitis and are known to be eye, skin, nose and throat irritants. These can be found in:
  - Paraphenylenediamine (PPD) which is widely used as a permanent hair dye
  - Glyceryl monothioglycolate which is a compound used to permanently curl hair
  - Ammonium persulfate (APS) which is widely used to "boost" peroxide hair bleaches
  - Cyclopentasiloxane (CPS) which is found in flat iron sprays and thermal projection sprays
  - Ethyl acrylate (EMA) acts as an adhesive to apply artificial nails (and eyelashes).
- Performing tasks involving wet work with bare hands increases risks of irritant contact dermatitis
- Irritant and allergic contact dermatitis are preventable by:
  - wearing disposable and non-latex gloves for wet work
  - drying your hands thoroughly with a disposable paper towel after wet work
  - moisturising your hands as often as possible with fragrance-free moisturiser
  - wearing a new pair of gloves for every customer
  - checking your skin regularly for early signs of skin problems.
- latex gloves increase risk of latex allergy. Powdered latex or nitrile gloves are often a preferred choice in salon use as they may reduce the risk of allergic contact dermatitis. Gloves should be single use, powder-free and fit properly. Use long-length gloves with folded cuffs to prevent water running down the arms where possible.

### Remember:

*Your employer should give you gloves and special hand creams to stop you getting dermatitis. You should always use them!*

*Nitrile gloves are appropriate to minimise dermal chemical exposure. Latex gloves are not protective and can cause allergies.*



## Respiratory and other health effects

Nail salon workers are exposed to a mixture of toxic chemicals including EMA, MMA, dibutyl phthalate (DBP), toluene, formaldehyde, acetone and other volatile organic compounds.

Research suggests that some of these chemicals may be linked to neurological symptoms (headaches, dizziness), respiratory effects (asthma), allergic contact dermatitis and reproductive harm (miscarriages). Constant elevated and prolonged exposures may lead to birth defects, developmental problems in children, liver damage, endocrine hormonal disruption and cancer.

### **Remember:**

*As a minimum wear a P1 Mask or P2 Mask (N95 Mask) if decanting or working with chemicals for prolonged periods.*

## Chemical burns

A chemical burn happens when skin or eyes come into contact with a corrosive chemical such as an acid or a base.

Some common cleaning agents like bleach, toilet and drain cleaners and disinfectants include corrosive chemicals. Common acid chemicals found in some hair product formulations are citric acid and benzoic acid, and some bases include sodium hydroxide (lye), potassium hydroxide or even ammonium hydroxide.

### **Be aware!**

- Corrosive chemicals can “eat through” clothing, metal, and other materials
- You must be trained and supervised when using corrosive chemicals
- You need to wear PPE (i.e. Mask, safety glasses, gloves, etc.) And suitable clothing when using corrosive chemicals
- Strong acids and strong bases react very dangerously when mixed together – they can boil and splash anything nearby. Mix chemicals safely by:
  - mixing and using in a well-ventilated area and using recommended PPE.
  - never mixing products unless recommended by the manufacturer
  - strictly following the manufacturer’s instructions. Diluting the products according to the instructions
  - replacing all caps immediately to avoid spillage and disposing of unused mixtures and empty containers carefully.
- First aid should be given for chemical burns as soon as possible.
  - Flush the skin with cool running water for at least 10 minutes.
  - For dry chemicals, brush off any remaining material before flushing, wear gloves or use a towel or other suitable object, such as a brush.
  - Remove clothing or jewellery that has been contaminated by the chemical.
  - Bandage the burn, cover the burn with a sterile gauze bandage (not fluffy cotton) or clean cloth. Wrap it loosely to avoid putting pressure on burned skin.
  - Flush again if needed. If you experience increased burning after the initial flushing, flush the burn area with water again for several more minutes.
  - Seek medical assistance if the burn is larger than a 20-cent coin, deep or infected, or covers the face, groin, buttocks or any major joint.



## Toxicity

Toxicity is the degree to which a toxic substance can damage an organism. Examples of these are dibutyl phthalate (DBP), toluene (used to create a smooth application to the nail), formaldehyde (used to harden nail polish and as a binding agent in some hair products).

Toxic chemicals such as chlorine for water purification and cyanides that are widely used as refrigerants are highly toxic if not used correctly.

To confirm whether the product is toxic, look for the danger hazard symbol on the product's label or its safety data sheet.

### Be aware!

- Some chemicals are not toxic on their own, but can react dangerously when mixed with certain chemicals to release toxic gases. Hypochlorite (bleach for cleaning) and oil mixtures release toxic chlorine gas.
- Some chemicals can release toxic gas when in contact with liquid or moisture. Common fumigant aluminium phosphide kills insects (weevils), animals (mice and rats) and humans by releasing toxic phosphine gas.
- If peroxide and henna hair dye are mixed, they can produce a harmful result. Henna products contain metallic salts which may react with hydrogen peroxide in other hair colours. This reaction can cause a chemical burn, which, in the worst case scenario, may cause hair to fall out.

## How can you keep safe from hazardous substances?

- Read the label – look for warning labels and signs. Always follow the danger safety warnings.
- Read the safety data sheet (SDS) for more information about the product and how to use it safely. Your employer must provide (or have available) safety information documents for any substances or products that are hazardous.
- Check the hazardous substance register at your workplace. It is a legal requirement that your employer must keep a current register of each hazardous substance that may be used or stored in the workplace.
- Prevent chemicals from coming in contact with your skin and the skin of clients. Wash your hands before and after each client, before eating, and after handling products.
- If you have existing medical conditions you should minimise chemical exposure and use additional control measures if needed.
- Your employer must conduct risk assessments and try to control the hazards. Depending on the outcome of a risk assessment by your employer, workers should consider being vaccinated against hepatitis B virus (HBV) (unless immune) due to the potential risk of blood borne infections. This should be paid for by the employer.
- Under Section 19 of the OSH Act, where it is not practicable to avoid the presence of hazards at the workplace, the employer must provide workers with adequate PPE and clothing to protect them against hazards without any cost to the worker.
- Your employer must provide hazardous substances information and training about potential health effects, safe work practices and suitable controls.

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## Quiz – Hazardous substances

14. Safety Data Sheets (SDS) provide essential information about:

- a. hazardous substances and chemical ingredients
- b. potential health effects from exposure to hazardous substances
- c. safe use, handling, first aid, disposal and storage requirements
- d. all of the above.





15. Water, shampoo, conditioners and toxic substances like nail polish remover can cause irritant contact dermatitis.
- True
  - False
16. Peroxide in common hair dye products and henna hair dye are safe to mix to boost natural hair colour.
- True
  - False
17. Which of the following statements is correct?
- Latex allergy caused by wearing latex gloves may result in contact allergic dermatitis.
  - Some common cleaning agents like bleach and disinfectants include corrosive chemicals.
  - Chemicals used in many nail and hair products may be respiratory irritants and sensitisers that may aggravate or cause asthma.
  - All of the above.
18. To reduce the risk of contact dermatitis on your hands, you should:
- dry your hands thoroughly with a disposable paper towel after wet work
  - moisturise your hands as often as possible with a fragrance-free moisturiser
  - wear disposable and non-latex gloves for wet work
  - all of the above.

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## Air Quality

Chemical products that are being applied to hair, nails and body in a salon may produce vapours or fumes which can be harmful. Dust from filing nails may create a health hazard. Repeatedly breathing in fumes and nail dust may cause headaches, irritation to the eyes, skin and throat, and respiratory issues.

Good ventilation is very important to the health and safety of workers and visitors to a salon as it can get rid of fumes and chemical smells that build up in a salon, reduce workers' inhalation of vapours, and limit their exposure to airborne particles such as nail dust and bacteria.

Good ventilation should be provided to control fumes and odours from the hazardous substances used every day in the hairdressing, nail and beauty industry. Ventilation can be provided through windows that open, an air conditioning system or extraction fans.

### How to detect poor air quality at your workplace?

Poor air quality can be recognised when:

- strong odours linger for more than 10 minutes
- strong odours can be detected at a distance from the source (i.e. the other side of the room)
- you still smell product odours when opening the salon in the morning
- the walls 'sweat' with moisture or the windows become foggy
- clients often complain of offensive odours.





## What can your employer do to protect you from poor air quality?

Your employer must conduct a risk assessment on workers' exposure to dust and/or chemical vapours to determine if the levels in the work place are a risk to workers. They can decide which control measures are effective to protect workers. This could include:

- installing extraction fans that remove air close to the source of chemicals
- ensuring that extracted air is removed outdoors into the open air, not just removed outside the salon. Salons in shopping centres should ensure that fumes and odours are not creating a health risk for other workers and members of the public at the centre
- using room air purification to further reduce overexposure to salon vapours and dusts
- installing vented manicure tables in nail salons with air extracted to the outdoors

## What can you do to protect yourself from poor air quality?

- Use small amounts of the product when performing services.
- Keep rubbish bins tightly closed.
- For a nail salon, electric fans should not be placed on tables as they increase the amount of airborne dust from nail filing. Use of electric buffers should also be kept to a minimum.
- Nail technicians should always wear a face mask when performing services to protect them from exposure to nail dust and chemical fumes.

### **Remember:**

*Your employer should ensure there is adequate ventilation at work.*

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## Quiz – Air quality

19. Why is good ventilation in the salon important?
- a. It's not really very important. It simply reduces product odour.
  - b. It's very important so that clients will visit the salon more often.
  - c. It's very important to health and safety of workers and clients or visitors as it reduces exposure to airborne particles and bacteria, and reduces inhalation of vapours.
  - d. It's not really important as it increases the cost of running the salon and clients will get charged more.
20. Poor air quality in the salon can be recognised when:
- a. strong odours linger for more than 10 minutes
  - b. strong odours can be detected from the other side of the room
  - c. clients often complain of offensive odours
  - d. all of the above.
-



## Infection control

Workers in the hairdressing, nail care and beauty industry are at risk of contacting transmissible diseases. Good hygiene is essential to minimise these risks.

### What can your employer do?

- Your employer should have risk control systems in place so that workers are not exposed to the risk of infectious disease.
- They must have safe work procedures for infection control in place; for example, procedures for cleaning and disinfecting all reusable equipment between clients, and safe handling and disposal of blades and sharps.
- Provide you with training on how to recognise signs of infection; for example, nails affected by fungi or mould.
- Provide you with PPE, such as gloves, aprons, dust masks and safety glasses, there is a possibility of contacting a transmissible disease while performing your tasks.

### What can you do to be safe?

- Regular hand washing with soap and water, especially before and after performing procedures on clients, and at any time when hands become contaminated.
  - Protection of damaged skin by covering with a waterproof dressing or gloves.
  - Do not handle another person's blood and body fluids with bare hands. Use personal protective equipment (PPE) provided to you.
  - Clean and disinfect equipment properly between clients, or use disposable equipment.
  - You may consider being immunised or having booster shots against Hepatitis B and Tetanus. Immunisation should be discussed with a health care professional.
- 

## Quiz – Infection control

21. What is NOT a preventative safety measure to keep yourself safe from infectious diseases at your workplace?
    - a. Wash hands with soap and water before and after each client.
    - b. Re-use blades used for shaving to cut costs.
    - c. Protect your damaged skin by covering with a waterproof dressing and wear disposable gloves while working on a client.
    - d. Immunise yourself against Hepatitis B.
  
  22. Workers in the hairdressing, nail care and beauty industry are at risk of contacting transmissible diseases.
    - a. True
    - b. False
-



## Electricity

*A hairdresser was temporarily paralysed by an electric shock from the hairdryer she was using. She fell to the ground and injured her back. Wires had twisted free inside the hairdryer because pins designed to keep them in place were missing.*

Hairdressing, nail and beauty salons are equipped with a variety of electrical devices. These devices are usually used in the proximity of wet conditions and, if they are not cared for, there will always be the danger of electric shocks.

Electric shocks happen when a person becomes part of an electrical circuit and the current flows through their body. Electricity passing through the body can cause convulsions (involuntary contractions of the muscles), the heart to stop beating, as well as internal and external burns. It can also cause secondary injuries resulting from falls or collisions and fire hazards resulting from an electrical fault.

Incidents with electricity are usually caused by:

- broken equipment such as frayed or broken power cords, plugs or power points
- installation and/or repairs being undertaken by an unqualified person
- a lack of experience, training or supervision
- an absence of a \*residual current device (RCD) or lack of testing of RCDs.

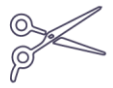
*\*An RCD is a safety switch or life-saving device designed to prevent you from receiving an electric shock if you touch something live, such as bare wire. If you are using portable electrical equipment and extension leads at work, it must have an RCD installed at the switchboard, built into a portable RCD outlet. The RCD must be regularly tested. This is a legal requirement.*

### What can your employer do?

- It is your employer's responsibility to make sure electrical equipment in the workplace is in good working order and regularly checked.
- Portable electrical equipment should be maintained regularly, checked and tested by a qualified electrician. Once the equipment is checked and tested, it should have a durable tag attached to clearly display the test date and the next scheduled test. This is known as Tag and Test.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for the installation and use of the equipment.
- Faulty electrical equipment must be removed, labelled as faulty and repaired or replaced.
- Store electrical equipment away from moist or wet areas.
- Train you to use electrical equipment safely.

### What can you do to protect yourself from electric shocks?

- Leave electrical equipment repairs to a qualified person.
  - Inspect and check equipment for potential hazards before each use. Check instructions and follow them.
  - Remember water and electricity do not mix. Never use electrical equipment when your hands are wet or mop the floors around electrical outlets.
  - Report any breakdowns or faulty equipment to your employer straight away.
  - Switch off appliances at the power point before you pull out the plug.
  - Never overload power boards with lots of electrical appliances.
  - Keep electrical cords off the floor.
-



## Quiz - Electricity

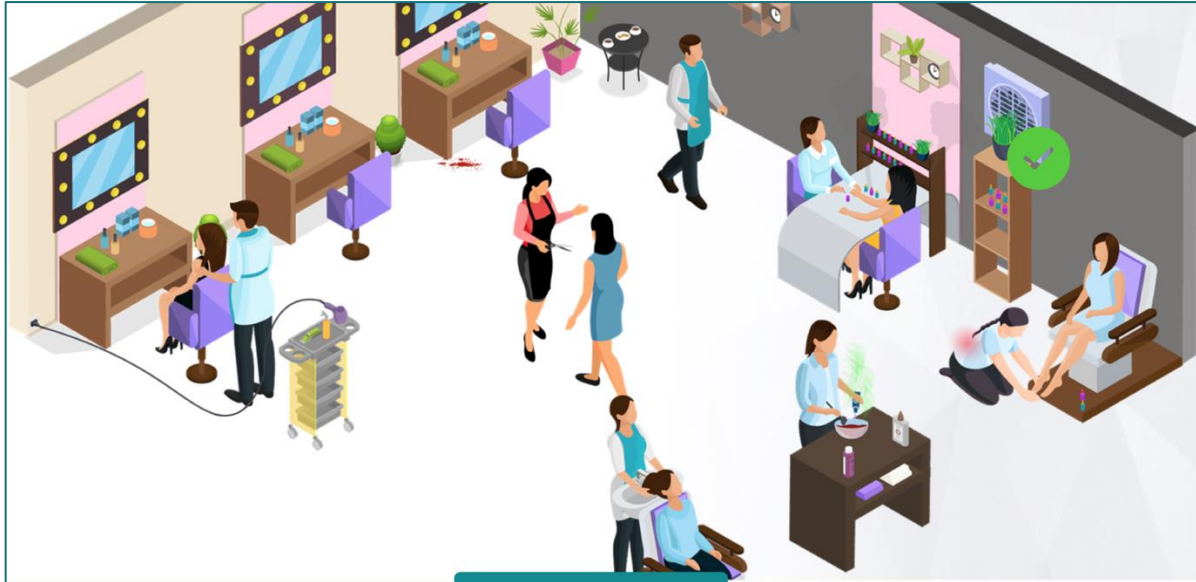
23. To reduce the risk of electric shock you should:
- pull out the plug quickly
  - tape frayed cords with electrical tape
  - switch off electrical equipment before you pull out the plug
  - pull out the plug with your wet hand.
24. What is the main reason for you to inspect and check the electrical equipment in a salon for potential hazards before each use?
- To prevent electric shocks.
  - To follow your employer's instructions.
  - To have something to do.
  - To look cool.
25. A residual current device (RCD):
- can be a circuit breaker
  - is a safety switch to prevent electrical shock
  - is required to be installed at the switchboard when using portable electrical equipment, power tools and extension leads at work
  - all of the above.
-



## Spot the hazards

### Laura's Salon de Belleza

There are 6 hazards in this area. Try and find them all.



### Hazard notebook

Fill in the hazard notebook

#	Spot the hazard	Assess the risk	Make the change	Monitor and follow-up
1	The extracting fan is blocked by a pot plant	Moderate	Move the plant so that the fan is completely unobstructed	Make sure the fan is always unobstructed
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				



## Hairdressing, nail care and beauty industry – Knowledge quiz

1. The most common health problems that can arise from hazardous manual tasks are:
  - a. musculoskeletal injuries
  - b. cold and flu
  - c. bone cancer
  - d. food allergies.
  
2. When should you receive task specific training to perform manual tasks?
  - a. During induction to the task.
  - b. As part of refresher training.
  - c. When work tasks are about to be changed or introduced.
  - d. All of the above.
  
3. What can be identified as a hazardous manual task in a salon?  
(Select **three** that apply)
  - a. Prolonged standing on hard concrete floors to perform tasks.
  - b. Leaning over a work table cutting, filing and buffing nails for extended periods.
  - c. Twisting of the spine while washing or cutting hair for an extended period.
  - d. Shampooing and conditioning hair.
  
4. What you should NOT do when working in a standing position for long periods of time and on a regular basis?
  - a. Wear high heels.
  - b. Use a seat whenever possible while working, or at least during rest breaks.
  - c. Always face what you are working on, with your body close to the work.
  - d. Avoid bending and stretching by adjusting client chairs up or down where possible.
  
5. What can you do to reduce work-related fatigue?
  - a. Have enough sleep before work.
  - b. Avoid eating, caffeine or alcohol before bedtime.
  - c. Wear low heeled, comfortable and covered shoes to work.
  - d. All of the above.
  
6. What causes work-related fatigue?
  - a. Inadequate rest breaks between shifts
  - b. Working night shifts or very early in the morning
  - c. Working extended or irregular shifts that are longer than 8 hours
  - d. All of the above.



7. What should you do if you receive a burn injury?
  - a. Run cool water over the burn for no more and no less than 20 minutes.
  - b. Cover the burn with a bandage.
  - c. Do not remove jewellery and clothing from around the burn area as you might lose them.
  - d. Apply ice over the burn to cool the skin.
  
8. In case of an accidental cut on your hand while working on a client, what should you do?
  - a. Inform your employer and seek first aid.
  - b. Clean with antiseptic and bandage the cut with waterproof dressing.
  - c. Wear single-use gloves during all procedures.
  - d. All of the above
  
9. When you drop scissors, you should always let them fall and then pick them up.
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
10. Which of the following statements indicate safe use of scissors?
  - a. When using scissors, cut away from your body.
  - b. One way to reduce the amount of hand force needed for cutting is to keep your scissors sharp.
  - c. Always pass a pair of scissors handle first to another person.
  - d. All of the above.
  
11. Suitable shoes that may prevent slip and trip hazards are:
  - a. closed toe, low heeled and comfortable with treads that are kept clean
  - b. open toe, rubber soled and colourful
  - c. shoes that are well worn without tread
  - d. stylish shoes.
  
12. Clean floors, keeping all work areas tidy and good lighting are important safety considerations in a beauty salon to:
  - a. ensure clients can read the magazines
  - b. reduce the risk of slips, trips and falls
  - c. make sure the salon looks uncluttered and attractive to customers
  - d. reduce the risk of backache.
  
13. What can cause slips, trips and falls in the salon?
  - a. Good lighting.
  - b. Salon is well maintained and in a clean and tidy condition.
  - c. Loose cords tangled on the floor from electrical tools.
  - d. There is sufficient space to work and safe movement in the salon.



14. Safety Data Sheets (SDS) provide essential information about:
- hazardous substances and chemical ingredients
  - potential health effects from exposure to hazardous substances
  - safe use, handling, first aid, disposal and storage requirements
  - all of the above.
15. Water, shampoo, conditioners and toxic substances like nail polish remover can cause irritant contact dermatitis.
- True
  - False
16. Peroxide in common hair dye products and henna hair dye are safe to mix to boost natural hair colour.
- True
  - False
17. Which of the following statements is correct?
- Latex allergy caused by wearing latex gloves may result in contact allergic dermatitis.
  - Some common cleaning agents like bleach and disinfectants include corrosive chemicals.
  - Chemicals used in many nail and hair products may be respiratory irritants and sensitisers that may aggravate or cause asthma.
  - All of the above.
18. To reduce the risk of contact dermatitis on your hands, you should:
- dry your hands thoroughly with a disposable paper towel after wet work
  - moisturise your hands as often as possible with a fragrance-free moisturiser
  - wear disposable and non-latex gloves for wet work
  - all of the above.
19. Why is good ventilation in the salon important?
- It's not really very important. It simply reduces product odour.
  - It's very important so that clients will visit the salon more often.
  - It's very important to health and safety of workers and clients or visitors as it reduces exposure to airborne particles and bacteria, and reduces inhalation of vapours.
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  - clients often complain of offensive odours





- d. all of the above.
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- True
  - False
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