



HCV FACT SHEET

HCV ADVOCATE

• HCV TRANSMISSION AND PREVENTION •

Nail Care and Beauty Parlor Settings

—Alan Franciscus, Editor-in-Chief

Forward

Hepatitis C (HCV or Hep C) is transmitted by contact with blood of an infected person. The most common way that Hep C is transmitted is through sharing needles to inject drugs. Hep C can also be transmitted through contaminated items used in personal care settings, although this isn't considered a high-risk route. However, transmission is possible if Hep C blood is present on equipment or surfaces.

Any equipment used by manicurists, skin care specialists and cosmetologists may transmit the Hep C virus if there is infected blood on it. It could happen even if there are small amounts of the Hep C virus that are too small to see. A sample of equipment used in these settings include:

- Nails and toes: cuticle scissors, nail files, emery boards, cotton swabs, etc.
- Hair cutting and removal tools: tweezers, electrolysis equipment, hair-cutting scissors, and possibly combs

The transmission of Hep C through personal care procedures has not been well-studied. Laws regarding health and safety standards in personal care settings vary from state to state.

Disposable Items

Any item that can't be disinfected should be thrown away. These items include paper emery boards, files, orange wood sticks, cotton balls or swabs, sponges, and neck strips. Single use items (straight razors, disposable razors) are encouraged. Single-use items should be thrown away and replaced with a new one.

Items to Clean and Disinfect

Note: Some states prohibit the use of some tools in personal care settings. Check your state for these regulations. A link is provided at the end of this article.

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H CSP FACT SHEET

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The information in this fact sheet is designed to help you understand and manage HCV and is not intended as medical advice. All persons with HCV should consult a medical practitioner for diagnosis and treatment of HCV.

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Items that need to be cleaned and disinfected include blade or scraper tools used to trim calluses. Needle-like instruments used to extract skin blemishes and cutting cuticles present risk of infection.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Equipment

Any items that are not disposable should be cleaned and disinfected. Commercial products such as Barricade, disinfect rather than sterilize. Solutions that are Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered hospital grade kill bacteria (bactericide), viruses (viricide), and fungi (fungicide).

Items that need to be sterilized are autoclaved. An autoclave is a machine that sterilizes instruments. It is the same machine used to sterilize medical and dental instruments.

Workplace/Work Surfaces

Make sure the workplace is clean. Used or dirty equipment must be kept separately from other items to prevent contamination with the clean items. Work surfaces should be disinfected after each customer. Products

should be kept in containers to allow for a single application. Soaking solutions are only used for one person. After each use, solutions are discarded and containers are disinfected.

Be a Proactive Consumer

The consumer (you) has the most important role in the prevention of Hep C in personal care settings. Keep your eyes open for safety issues. Ask questions about safety. Talk with family and friends about where they frequent. Don't choose a salon just because it's cheap; you may get more than you want.

There are other steps to take to improve safety measures. Many drug stores sell individual manicure and pedicure sets. Individual sets can be taken to a salon for each visit or stored at the salon. Single packaged disinfection solutions can be purchased at drug stores and poured into hand and foot solutions. Make sure they are EPA-approved.

Finally, do not share any personal care items with anyone, even at home.

Note: This fact sheet was adapted and updated from an article that appeared in the HCV Advocate by Dr. Norah Terrault.

Related publications:

Nails Magazine provides information for nail salon workers

<https://www.nailsmag.com/whitepapers/list>

OSHA provides a booklet: A Guide for Nail Salon Workers

<https://files.nailsmag.com/Handouts/OSHASTayHealthy.pdf>

For more information about HCV transmission and prevention, visit our website fact sheets at:

<http://hcvadvocate.org/publications/fact-sheets/hcv-transmission-and-prevention-facts/>

For more information

Americans with Disabilities Act

www.ada.gov

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

www.cdc.gov

Mayo Clinic

www.mayoclinic.org

MedlinePlus

www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus