



2016

Addressing Nail Salon Worker Patient Health

A Health Center Toolkit

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Established in 1987, the Associations of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO) is a national association of 35 community health organizations dedicated to promoting advocacy, collaboration and leadership that improves the health status and access of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders (AA&NHPIs) in the U.S. and its territories.

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We offer our sincere thanks to Asian Health Services (AHS) staff and volunteers for contributing their time, expertise and insight to assemble this report.

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Due to a major gap in federal legislation, known carcinogens, reproductive toxicants and endocrine disruptors are prevalent in numerous nail care products. Nail salon workers, the majority of whom are immigrant, low-income women, handle these products on a daily basis, sometimes for 8-10 hours a day. As a result, nail salon workers disproportionately experience significant health issues and health disparities.

To highlight strategies and best practices in patient-centered care for nail salon workers, and to assist existing and potential health centers improve care for patients who work in the nail salon industry, AAPCHO has compiled this report entitled, *“Addressing Nail Salon Worker Patient Health”*. This report will provide an overview of innovative approaches to nail salon patient engagement and provide useful information on how a health center can establish and implement programs to address the health disparities faced by nail salon workers while improving care for this population. To do this, AAPCHO worked closely with Asian Health Services (AHS), an AA&NHPI-serving health center, that has spearheaded innovative services and work for its nail salon patients.

The Role of Health Centers in Providing Care to Nail Salon Worker Patients

Nationally, there are over 400,000 nail salon workers. The majority of these workers are of Asian descent and a significant number are Vietnamese.¹ These workers handle products that contain known carcinogens and reproductive toxicants on a daily basis to help make their customers feel beautiful. As a result, many workers disproportionately experience a multitude of health issues compared to the general population. These health conditions range from asthma, headaches, respiratory illnesses and chronic dermatitis to cancer and reproductive health impacts, including miscarriage and maternal complications.² Workers are predominantly immigrants of reproductive age who have limited English proficiency (LEP). Given that nail salon workers often earn less than \$23,000 a year, it is not uncommon for nail salon workers to go to health centers for their health care.³ Health centers have a unique opportunity to address the health disparities faced by this overlooked population of workers and contribute to local and national advocacy that upholds their health, safety and rights.

Promoting Patient-Centered Care

AHS started in 1974 as a one-room clinic in Oakland Chinatown staffed completely by student volunteers and community activists. Currently, AHS provides over 117,000 medical and dental visits to over 27,000 patients annually, and is a nationally recognized comprehensive community health center model for serving a primarily low-income, limited English-speaking population.

AHS first noted the epidemic of health issues that nail salon workers were facing in 2005 when its Community Health Workers conducted outreach to community members about diabetes education. Recognizing the complex factors that were at the root of the health issues experienced by workers, AHS established a coalition of partners to begin addressing these issues, and founded the California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative. Utilizing a public health approach, AHS has implemented numerous strategies to positively impact patients and community members who work in the nail salon industry.

This toolkit focuses on providing information and tools that health centers can utilize to support engagement with patients who work in the nail salon industry. Since health centers have an opportunity to provide health related and focused support for vulnerable community members who work in the nail salon industry, we have compiled a menu of potential strategies and activities that health centers can utilize to impact nail salon worker health. This toolkit includes health and safety educational materials, a sample workshop curriculum, and a provider screening process. It also describes ways in which community health center staff can implement both patient and community focused activities. Given the lack of available health care resources for nail salon workers, it is our hope that this toolkit's resources will lead to new health care and social service programs that are responsive and effective in addressing the unique needs of the nail salon worker population throughout the country.

1. Nails Magazine (2014) Nail technician demographics. NAILS, Torrance
2. Quach, T.; Behren, J.; Golberg, D.; Layefsky, M.; Reynolds, P. 2014 "Adverse birth outcomes and maternal complications in licensed cosmetologists and manicurists in California" *Int Arch Occup Environ Health* DOI 10.1007/s00420-014-1011-0.
3. <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/10/nyregion/at-nail-salons-in-nyc-manicurists-are-underpaid-and-unprotected.html>

Who are nail salon workers?

Currently there are over 400,000 nail salon workers nationally, the majority of whom are of reproductive age and immigrant women of color.¹ Many are limited English proficient, lack access to health care coverage, and are unaware of labor laws designed to protect their rights and safety. On a daily basis, 7-10 hours a day, nail salon workers handle polishes, glues, disinfectants, and other products containing toxic chemicals known to cause asthma, reproductive harm, and cancer. Nail salon workers often earn less than \$23,000 a year.² A recent New York Times article reported wages as low as \$10-\$35 per day. Major gaps in federal policy that legally allow harmful chemicals to be placed in nail care products, and the lack of resources and support for immigrant workers are key root causes of the health disparities and inequities faced by this workforce.

"I started working as a manicurist because I speak little English, but I ended up suffering from asthma and lung problems. Twelve years later, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. It was then that I decided to stop working as a manicurist after sacrificing my health and my life for a living." – Nail Salon Technician

Common health issues

Manicurists often work long hours in poorly ventilated salons, resulting in prolonged exposure to dangerous chemicals, such as toluene, formaldehyde and dibutyl phthalate, which are linked to poor health outcomes such as cancer and reproductive harm.³ Acrylates, commonly found in artificial nail treatments, are associated with eczema and contact dermatitis, such as hives, skin itching, blistering, and burning.⁴ Of the more than 10,000 chemicals used in personal care and nail products, 89 percent have not been tested independently for their safety or impacts on human health before entering the marketplace.⁵ Nail salon workers are at risk for occupational-related health impacts due to occupational exposures, low awareness of health risks, and limited access to health care. While acute impacts, such as rashes and respiratory ailments have been well-documented, little research has been conducted to date on the long-term chronic health impacts of toxic occupational exposures on salon workers. Additionally, there remains a paucity of culturally and linguistically appropriate educational and outreach materials intended to build awareness about health and safety precautions and the availability of less harmful salon products.

"I have been most concerned about how hard it's been to carry my pregnancy through term. I have had two miscarriages. I don't know if they are due to the chemicals I work with, but I heard they may cause reproductive problems."
– Nail Salon Technician



1. Nails Magazine (2014) Nail technician demographics. NAILS, Torrance
2. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2015). Occupational Employment and Wages, May 2015.
3. Quach, T.; Behren, J.; Golberg, D.; Layefsky, M.; Reynolds, P. 2015 "Adverse birth outcomes and maternal complications in licensed cosmetologists and manicurists in California" *Int Arch Occup Environ Health* DOI 10.1007/s00420-014-1011-0
4. <http://scopeblog.stanford.edu/2013/09/12/gel-polish-what-risks-lie-beneath-painted-beauty>
5. Environmental Working Group, Safety in the Hands of the Cosmetics Industry, at <http://www.cosmeticsdatabase.com/research/industry.php> accessed on March 25, 2010

The following are strategies that health centers can tailor and adapt, based on their unique circumstances, to address nail salon worker health disparities and inequities at the patient and community level.

PATIENT APPROACH: Addressing the Health of Patients Who are Nail Salon Workers

Given their occupational exposures, history of immigration, low awareness of health risks, and limited access to health care, nail salon workers have complex health profiles that place them at risk for occupational-related health impacts. Health care providers at health centers are uniquely positioned to help patients who work in nail salons understand if their medical complaint is connected to their work.

PROVIDERS

Using the AHS Provider Screening Tool (see Appendix F), providers can help identify appropriate health and safety tips for patients experiencing health issues. Providers can also distribute the educational handouts provided in this toolkit detailing how patients can take the appropriate measures to reduce their exposure to chemicals, infectious disease and key ergonomic exercises if a patient is experiencing any aches and pains. For more information, see “Appendix F: Key Screening Questions.” If Healthy Nail Salons exist in your county or city, a provider can encourage patients to work in a healthy nail salon that emphasizes best workplace practices and utilizes safer products and ventilation. For more information, see “Appendix F: Tips for Primary Care Providers.”

PATIENT NAVIGATORS

Patient Navigators in health centers often assist patients connect to needed social services. Patient Navigators can support patients working in the nail salon industry who are experiencing labor violations (ie. not receiving paid wages, unlawful deductions from paycheck, etc.) to legal support service agencies. A Patient Navigator can also provide support to those patients in need of transportation or specialty medical appointments due to more severe occupational health issues they may be experiencing.



COMMUNITY APPROACH: Working with the Nail Salon Community

HEALTH EDUCATORS

A Health Educator or Community Health Worker can begin hosting health education workshops for nail salon patients by using the attached Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) curriculum and handouts titled, “Patients Who Work in Nail Salons” (see Appendix C-E) and “Nail Salon Worker and Owner Health and Safety Training” (see Appendix G). These materials can serve as the basis for a one to two-hour workshop for patients that can help educate nail salon workers about healthy workplace practices.

Strategies for patient recruitment to these workshops include:

- 1) Creating flyers that can be posted in each exam room
- 2) Posting an announcement in ethnic media
- 3) Providing low-cost incentives for personal protective equipment such as nitrile gloves for attending the workshop

OUTREACH WORKERS

Outreach workers can conduct community outreach by visiting nail salons located within the clinic’s service area and providing brochures about the health center accompanied by information about workplace health and safety tips (see Appendix A, C, D and E). These brochures should include contact information so a worker can connect with someone at the health center. Outreach workers can distribute the three different “Patients Who Work in Nail Salons,” handouts to workers. Outreach workers can invite nail salon workers and owners to the health center for health care services and to attend health education workshops, if available. Health education or outreach workers, can implement nail salon worker health education workshops based on the materials presented in this toolkit.

Nail Salon Worker and Owner Health and Safety Training

With support of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), U.S. Department of Labor, and University of California Berkeley Labor Occupational Health Program, AHS worked with the California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative, to create a training curriculum and educational materials* to educate Vietnamese-speaking nail salon workforce members about occupational health and safety risks and tips for improving worker health when giving manicures and pedicures. Health centers can utilize this curriculum, which is included in this toolkit, to educate low-income nail salon workforce members about key health and safety workplace tips. This curriculum was created to promote discussion and interaction so that recommended workplace concepts and practices could be easily understood by limited-English and low-literate speaking populations.

“I learned how to prevent my back and wrist from hurting. I follow these steps to keep from hurting every day.”
- Nail Salon Worker



The toolkit includes health and safety educational handouts that can be utilized for worker and owner trainings detailing how patients can take the appropriate measures to reduce their exposure to chemicals and infectious disease (see Appendix D). In addition to exposure to harmful chemical in products, nail salon workers can be exposed to infectious agents such as human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and Hepatitis B and C if a worker comes into contact with infected blood from a client. Appendix E provides information on ways to prevent exposure to biological hazards. Since workers often perform repetitive movements and may lean over from long periods of time when servicing clients for pedicures, workers often experience aches and pains. Appendix C provides tips to reduce these hazards. Please refer to Appendix C, D, and E for three different handouts “Patients Who Work in Nail Salons,” that may be distributed to patients.

*This material was produced under grant number SH-27691-15-60-F6 from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, U.S. Department of Labor. It does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Labor, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government. 2011; This material was then revised in 2016 under grant number SH-27691-SH5 for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, U.S. Department of Labor; Also produced with support from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Spotlight on Asian Health Services and the California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative

The California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative: How it all began

Founded in 2005, the mission of the California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative (Collaborative) is to improve the health, safety, and workplace rights of the nail and beauty care workforce to achieve a healthier, more sustainable, and just industry. The Collaborative was formed when community health workers at AHS, a health center located in Oakland, CA, documented an increasing number of patients and community members working in nail salon shops that exhibited acute symptoms, such as chronic asthma, dermatitis, and memory loss with a significant number experiencing reproductive health impacts and other chronic issues such as cancer. It was soon discovered that this was an overlooked epidemic--nail salon workers, working long hours, 6-7 days a week, were unknowingly and chronically exposed to reproductively harmful chemicals and known carcinogens found in the nail products and solvents they utilized to pamper clients on a daily basis.



The epidemic of public health, environmental and reproductive justice issues faced by this overlooked population of primarily Vietnamese immigrants prompted the founding of the Collaborative by AHS to address these issues utilizing a multi-tiered approach of community organizing, policy advocacy and community based research. The Collaborative now serves as a statewide coalition of over 20 organizations, and a committee of nationwide experts and researchers dedicated to salon worker health and safety. The Collaborative also includes over 50 salon workers from across California who meet on a regular basis. The Collaborative engages its members in resource and information sharing, the identification of key issues and opportunities, and the development and implementation of common strategies, language, policies and coordinated activities and campaigns. The Collaborative

has been instrumental in working with County partners in establishing Healthy Nail Salon Recognition Programs, which reward and recognize salons for prioritizing health, throughout California.

Establishing Healthy Nail Salon Recognition Programs

The Collaborative and AHS formed strategic partnerships with local policymakers and key champions in the Departments of Public Health and Departments of Environmental Health in four counties and one city. The Collaborative and AHS shared materials, such as the ones provided in this toolkit, with county Departments of Environmental Health and local policymakers to provide initial education about health and safety issues facing nail salon workers. The Collaborative and AHS worked with then San Francisco Board Supervisor David Chiu on a Healthy Nail Salon ordinance and once passed, worked with the San Francisco Department of Environment to establish the first Healthy Nail Salon Recognition Program (HNSRP). The HNSRP has been a model program that has been replicated by counties and cities throughout California. It is a voluntary, incentive-based program that rewards salons that promote healthier and safer practices. Nail salons who meet the requirements are certified as Healthy Nail Salons by the county/city, promoted on the county/city website, and receive financial rebates for mechanical ventilation units. These Healthy Nail Salon certifications are renewed at least once a year. There are now over 100 officially recognized Health Nail Salons throughout the state of California.



Spotlight on Asian Health Services and the California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative

Building structured partnerships with local community organizations and allies

The Collaborative first began building partnerships with local community allies and organizations interested in helping to address nail salon worker health and safety issues. Monthly meetings were scheduled to discuss the issues faced by workers that had slowly begun unfolding from AHS' outreach in nail salons. Initial discussions which focused on outreach strategies and education soon evolved into the policy action that needed to occur as well as the research needed in this area. AHS first began meeting with four groups, and over time, AHS brought together more than ten organization from across the state to form the California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative. The Collaborative is now a twenty member coalition. Seed funding from The California Endowment and The Women's Foundation of California was critical to the establishment of the Collaborative. Also critical to the success of the Collaborative's work has been the identification of community leaders and champions within each member organization and within policy, research and outreach areas.



CONCLUSION

Health centers serve as an important cornerstone in our nation’s health care system. As an important safety-net provider for vulnerable populations, health centers have a key opportunity to impact the health of patients who work in the nail salon industry and are generally low-income and limited English speaking immigrants. Health centers can play a critical role in assuring health care access to nail salon workers while providing them with important information and education on tips to protect their health in the workplace - from reducing harmful chemical workplace exposures to preventing common occupational aches and pains. Health centers also have an important opportunity to leverage the “social determinants of health” (ie. the social, economic, and physical conditions that underlie and shape health) to impact the health and well-being of nail salon worker patients through the strategies and tools provided in this toolkit. Overall, the tools and information presented can help health centers establish ways in which providers and clinical staff can prepare to best serve patients who work in the nail salon industry as well as consider options for engaging in partnerships that can impact the social needs of these patients.

AHS' Health Center Toolkit:

- A: Fact sheet on the nail salon worker population
- B: Resource list
- C: Health education materials for nail salon workers - Aches and Pains
- D: Health education materials for nail salon workers - Chemicals
- E: Health education materials for nail salon workers - Infectious Disease
- F: Tip Sheet and Screening Tool for Providers
- G: Intro to OSHA materials



KNOW THE FACTS:

Know your patients who work in nail salons

Demographics

Over 400,000 nail technicians in the U.S. and 97% are female, 3% male

COMMON HEALTH ISSUES*

Nail salon workers are cumulatively exposed to a multitude of chemicals in nail care products for long periods of time. These chemicals are known carcinogens and reproductive toxicants.

Acute Symptoms

Nose, throat, lung, skin and eye irritations, asthma, chronic dermatitis, headaches, and dizziness

Potential Long-term Health Impacts

Maternal health complications, adverse reproductive health, memory loss, cancer

Ergonomic Issues

Chronic pains, carpal tunnel, and back pains



In Her Words

"I have been most concerned about how hard it's been to carry my pregnancy through term. I have had 2 miscarriages. I don't know if they are due to the chemicals I work with, but I heard they may cause reproductive problems..." - Nail Salon Technician

Ethnicity



= 51% Vietnamese

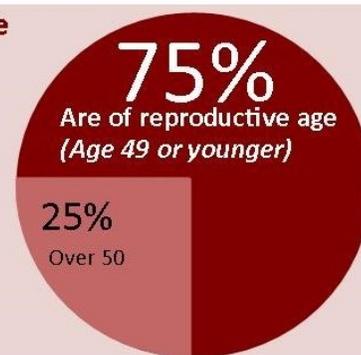


= 40% Caucasian



= 9% African American,
Hispanic, and Other

Age



Source: NAILS Magazine. (2015). *Big Book Statistics*

*Quach et. al. (2014). Adverse birth outcomes and maternal complications in licensed cosmetologists and manicurists in California. *International Archives of Occupational and Environmental Health*, 88(7):823-33.



**There are over 129,000 nail salons in the U.S.
with the most salons in CA, NY, TX and FL. ***

(Source: NAILS Magazine. (2015). *Big Book Statistics*)

Many nail salon workers



Are recent immigrants with limited English proficiency



Work 8-10 hours a day and 6-7 days a week



Lack understanding of the U.S. legal and health care systems



Average income is \$23,000 a year

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2015). Occupational Employment and Wages, May 2015.

Research Findings*

Recent studies show that nail salon workers experience increased risk for:

- ◆ **infertility**
- ◆ **gestational diabetes**
- ◆ **small gestational age**
- ◆ **placenta previa**

Other adverse maternal health indicators include
postpartum hemorrhage, hypertension, and prolonged rupture of membranes

In Her Words

“I started working as a manicurist because I speak little English, but I ended up suffering from asthma and lung problems. Twelve years later, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. It was then that I decided to stop working as a manicurist after sacrificing my health and my life for a living.” - Nail Salon Technician

* Quach et. al. (2014). Adverse birth outcomes and maternal complications in licensed cosmetologists and manicurists in California. *International Archives of Occupational and Environmental Health*, 88(7):823-33.

Quach et. al. (2011). Characterizing Workplace Exposures in Vietnamese Women Working in California Nail Salons. *American Journal of Public Health*, e1-e6.

Quach et. al. (2011). Air monitoring of Solvents in Nail salon Shops in California. *Epidemiology*, 22(1): 271-72.

Roelofs et. al. (2008). Results from Community-based Occupational Health Survey of Vietnamese-American Nail salon Workers.” *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health*, 10: 353-61.

Quach et. al. (2014). Adverse birth outcomes and maternal complications in licensed cosmetologists and manicurists in California. *International Archives of Occupational and Environmental Health*, 88(7):823-33.

John et. al. Spontaneous abortions among cosmetologists. *Epidemiology*, 22(1):



ASIAN HEALTH SERVICES

Resource List

This document includes a list of federal, state, and local resources that any health center can access to support activities and education for patients who work in the nail salon industry.

WORKSHOP CURRICULUM & MATERIALS

EPA

Practical Guide to Protecting the Health of Nail Salon Workers

Preventing Pedicure Foot Spa Infections

Recommended Cleaning and Disinfection Procedures for Foot Spa Basins in Salons

Hazard Communication Standard for Chemical Labels and Safety Data Sheets

<https://www.epa.gov/saferchoice/protecting-health-nail-salon-workers-0>

OSHA

Stay Healthy and Safe While Giving Manicures and Pedicures: A Guide for Nail Salon Workers

Health Hazards in Nail Salons

Health Hazards in Nail Salons: Chemical Hazards

<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/nailsalons/>

STATE RESOURCES

California Department of Toxic Substances Control - Safer Nail Products <https://www.dtsc.ca.gov/PollutionPrevention/SaferNailProducts.cfm>

Boston Public Health Commission - Safe Nail Salons <http://www.bphc.org/whatwedo/healthy-homes-environment/safe-nail-salons/Pages/Safe-Nail-Salons.aspx>

King County Local Hazardous Waste Program - <http://www.hazwastehelp.org/health/nail-salons.aspx>

Oregon Collaborative for Healthy Nail Salons <http://www.oregonhealthynailsalons.org/>

Washington State Hazardous Waste & Toxics Reduction Program <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/hwtr/>

HEALTHY NAIL SALONS

Alameda County <http://www.co.alameda.ca.us/aceh/healthynail/index.htm>

City of Santa Monica <https://www.smgov.net/healthynailsalon/>

Santa Clara County <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/cpd/programs/HN/Pages/home.aspx>

San Francisco County <http://sfenvironment.org/pretty-shouldnt-stink-healthy-nail-salon-program>

San Mateo County <http://smchealth.org/healthynails>

ORGANIZATIONS

Adhikaar - <http://www.adhikaar.org/nail-salon-campaign/>

California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative - <http://www.cahealthynailsalons.org/>

Marin Asian Advocacy Project - <http://camarin.org/safety-net/Marin-Asian-Advocacy-Project.html>

National Council for Occupational Safety and Health - <http://www.coshnetwork.org/>

Women's Voices for the Earth - <http://www.womensvoices.org/>

Worksafe - <http://www.worksafe.org/>

PATIENTS WHO WORK IN NAIL SALONS: Preventing Aches and Pains

Patients who work in the nail salon industry may experience aches and pains due to the repetitive movements of doing manicures and pedicures. These are called “ergonomic hazards.” The following tips are to reduce ergonomic hazards.*

What can cause these injuries at work?

Aches and pains can be caused by holding the body in an awkward position when performing manicures and pedicures on clients. Aches and pains can also be caused by pressure on contact points. This can happen when your body touches a hard surface such as a manicure workstation.



Bad Position



Good Position

Remember:

Adjust the lighting, chair, work tables, and other equipment to make your body comfortable.

There are many things you can do to prevent aches and pains.

- 1. Raise the client’s hand or foot.** Use a cushion or clean towel to raise the client’s hand or foot so you do not have to bend over as far.
- 2. Use an adjustable chair.** Sit so that your feet are flat on the floor and your back is supported.
- 3. Put a towel or foam pad** on the table edge to soften it.
- 4. Adjust the lighting.** Good lighting can help you see without having to bend over.

**This document draws from Occupational Safety and Health Administration’s “Stay Healthy and Safe While Giving Manicures and Pedicures: A Guide for Nail Salon Workers.”*

APPENDIX C

- 5. **Take frequent breaks if possible.** Changing positions and doing a different task is also helpful.
- 6. **Slow down when possible.** If you are working too fast, your body becomes tense and it is easier to get muscle pain.
- 7. **Do gentle stretching exercises in between clients.** You may need to check with a doctor first!

These are exercises that can help a patient who works in the nail salon industry prevent work-related ergonomic and musculoskeletal aches and pains.

Gentle stretching for the neck



Shoulders and upper back

Arms and shoulders



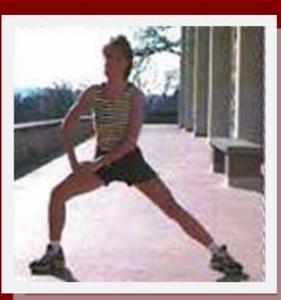
Lower back and hips



Back of thighs



Inner thighs



Fingers



Ankles



Take a moment to think about whether there are any parts of your body that are hurting or uncomfortable.

Where do you hurt?



PATIENTS WHO WORK IN NAIL SALONS: Reducing Chemical Exposure

Patients who work in nail salons are exposed to a multitude of chemicals in nail care products on a daily basis. These are tips providers can give to help patients reduce their chemical exposure.

Chemicals affect different people in different ways. Some chemicals used in nail salons can cause skin rashes; eye, nose, and throat irritations; dizziness; and headaches. Other chemicals may cause more serious illnesses. If you use chemicals all day, every day, you are more likely to get sick than someone who uses the same chemicals once in a while. **You can breathe in, accidentally swallow, and/or absorb chemicals through your skin.**

There are many things you can do to make your work safer from chemicals.

1. Choose safer products when possible.

Safer nail polishes do not contain the toxic trio: dibutyl phthalate, formaldehyde, and toluene.

2. Let in fresh air.

- Open doors and windows when possible.
- Make sure ventilation systems or window fans work properly .
 - Change filters on ventilation machines regularly.
 - It is best if tables are vented to the outside.

Good Ventilation



Bad Ventilation



Place floor fans near open doors or windows to let in more fresh air.

Remember:

Just because something has little or no odor does not mean it is safe.
Some chemicals have no odor but are still harmful to your body.

**This document draws from Occupational Safety and Health Administration's "Stay Healthy and Safe While Giving Manicures and Pedicures: A Guide for Nail Salon Workers."*

Reducing Chemical Exposure

3. Use good practices.

- Always read labels and follow instructions when using products.
- Store chemicals upright, in small bottles.
- Label all chemicals.
- Close bottles when you are not using them.
- Put any trash soaked with chemicals (like cotton balls) in a sealed bag before you put it in the trash can.
- Keep the trash covered.
- Wash your hands before eating, drinking, or smoking.
- Wash your hands before and after each client.
- Wash your hands after handling salon chemicals.
- Do not eat or drink near your workstation.
- When transferring chemicals to small bottles, open doors and windows. Wear goggles, gloves, and possibly an air-purifying respirator.



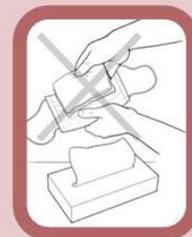
4. Use proper personal protective equipment.

- Use the right gloves.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts.
- Wash your work clothes separately from other clothes to prevent chemicals from spreading to other clothes.
- It can be difficult to use a mask properly. Wearing the wrong mask or a mask that does not fit can be worse for your health.



Remember:

Gloves, goggles, and masks can play an important role in safety. However, choosing safer products and letting in fresh air are the best ways to make the workplace safer.





PATIENTS WHO WORK IN NAIL SALONS: Preventing Infectious Disease

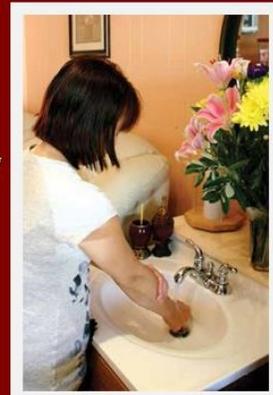
Infectious diseases include the common cold, flu, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), and Hepatitis B (a liver infection). You can become infected if you come into contact with infected blood or bodily fluids. *

There are many ways to protect yourself.

1. **Avoid touching any blood or bodily fluids.**
2. **Wear gloves.** Throw away your gloves after using them. Do not provide services to a client with cuts, open sores, or blisters that you might touch.
3. **Always wash your hands with soap and water.**
4. **Bandage and cover** all open cuts or bruises on your skin.
5. **If a client bleeds, don't touch the blood.** Hand the client a cotton ball to put pressure on the cut and ask them to throw it in the trash.
6. **Consider getting immunized against Hepatitis B.** Your doctor can help you decide whether this is needed. If you are likely to come into contact with blood or bodily fluids, immunization may be required.



Remember:
Avoid touching any blood or bodily fluids. Wear gloves and follow rules for disinfecting.



7. Disinfect tools after each client.

- Wash tools with soap and water and rinse in clean water.
 - Dry with a clean cloth or towel.
- Immerse tools in an EPA-registered disinfectant for 10-30 minutes, depending on manufacturer's directions. The disinfectant must be covered at all times. Change the disinfectant at least once a week or whenever it is cloudy or dirty.
 - Dry with a clean cloth or towel and store in a clean, covered place.

You can also use a steam sterilizer (autoclave) to sterilize tools. Make sure the autoclave is registered with the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Note that an autoclave is different from an ultraviolet (UV) sanitizing box, which should only be used to store clean, disinfected tools.

8. Disinfect foot basins and spas after each client and at the end of the day.

- Follow the Board of Barbering & Cosmetology rules (Title 16, California Code of Regulations § 980.1-980.3) for how to clean basins and foot spas. There are different rules for cleaning whirlpool footspas, pipeless foot spas, and non-whirlpool foot basins.
 - Always use gloves.
- Always write down the time and date of each cleaning in a pedicure-cleaning log.

Try to avoid using disinfectants that contain quarternary ammonium compounds (such as benzalkonium chloride).

Let in as much fresh air as possible.

Try to clean surfaces before disinfecting.
This can help reduce the amount of disinfectant you use.

When disinfecting surfaces like worktables,
disinfect only in areas where it is necessary.

Follow manufacturers' directions for
diluting disinfectant with water.



Autoclave



UV Sanitizing Box

**“I learned about disinfecting tools a long time ago from school. It’s helpful to be reminded.
I follow these steps in keeping my tools clean.”**

Nail Salon Worker

**This document draws from Occupational Safety and Health Administration’s “Stay Healthy and Safe While Giving Manicures and Pedicures: A Guide for Nail Salon Workers.”*



TIPS FOR PRIMARY CARE PROVIDERS

Given their occupational exposures, history of immigration, low awareness of health risks, and limited access to health care, nail salon workers have complex health profiles that place them at risk for occupational-related health impacts. These are tips for primary care providers to best serve patients who work in nail salons.

Discussing health with a patient who is a nail salon worker:

Healthcare professionals who frequently treat patients that are nail salon workers often hear personal stories from patients detailing **day to day aches and pains and the fear of the unknown**. The best thing a healthcare professional can do is to make these patients feel safer by giving them information. Patients can then decide for themselves how much they will work in the industry.

What is the best advice a healthcare professional can give a patient who is a nail salon employee?

Decreasing exposure to chemicals is the best way to reduce adverse health effects.

You can encourage patients to **limit chemical exposure by wearing nitrile gloves**.

Workers may not have control over the specific products used in their salon, but they can find jobs at salons designated as “**Healthy Nail Salons**” (see “National Partners and Organizations Resource List.”) which use less toxic chemicals and proper ventilation. Employees can ask employers to **open windows and doors, and purchase safer product alternatives**.

Other tips and information:

- Safer nail polishes do not contain the toxic trio: dibutyl phthalate, formaldehyde, and toluene.
- A salon’s chemical odor cannot be used to determine if the salon is safe for your patient as some chemicals cause harm before they can be detected.
- Some patients are nail salon owners. **Educating owners** can encourage them to make simple changes such as opening windows, improving ventilation, and buying less toxic products which can greatly improve workplace conditions.
- Medical providers can refer patients who are nail salon workers to Healthy Nail Salons in the area who may be recruiting new employees.

More Resources:

The following materials in this toolkit can be provided as educational materials for your patients:

- Patients Who Work in Nail Salons: Infectious Disease
- Patients Who Work in Nail Salons: Preventing Aches and Pains
- Patients Who Work in Nail Salons: Reducing Chemical Exposure

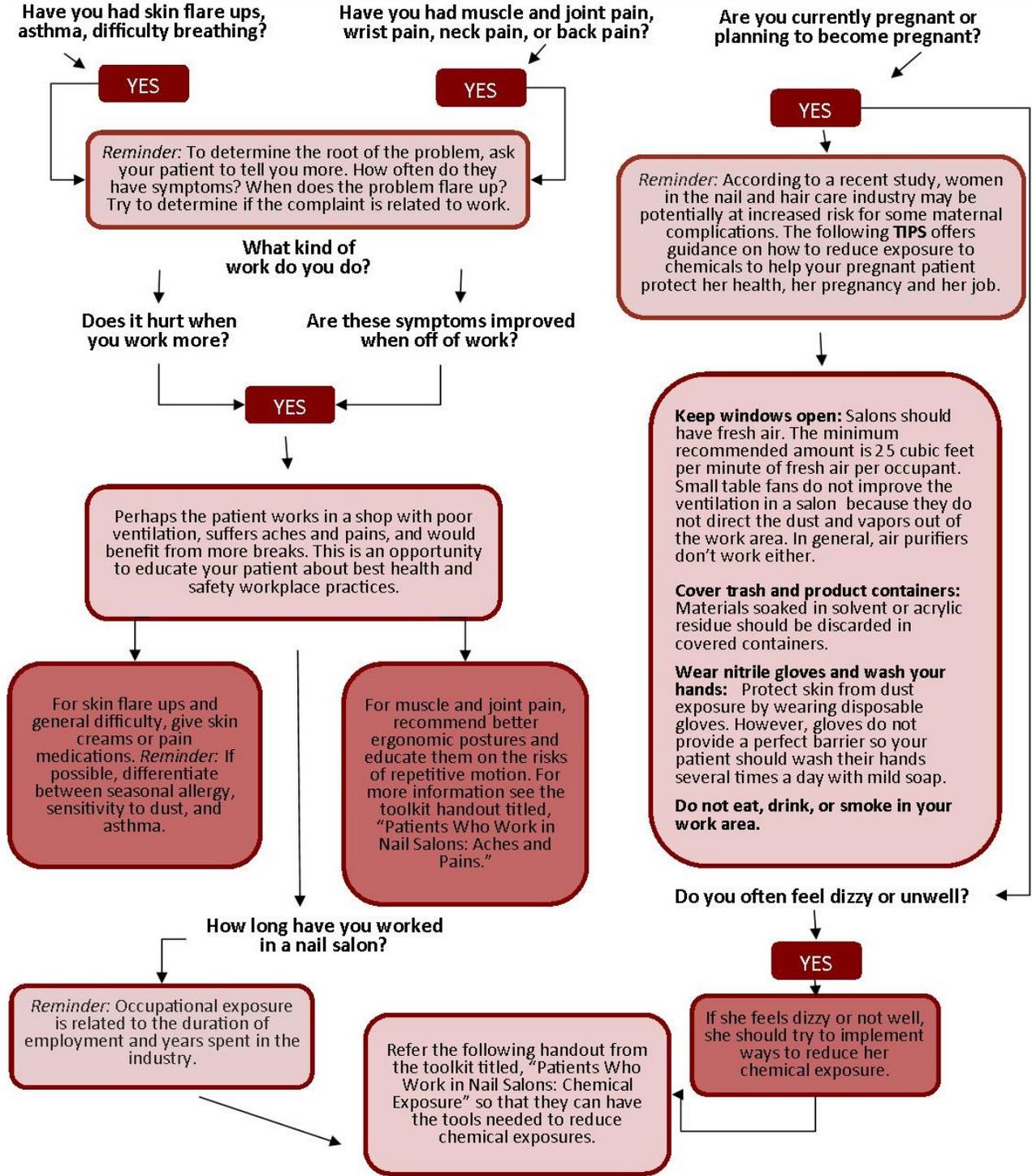
IN HER WORDS

“I experience constant headaches. These chemicals irritate my throat and make me cough daily, so much that I have to excuse myself to go to the restroom because I get into coughing fits.”

Nail Salon Technician

Key Screening Questions

As a healthcare professional, you are uniquely positioned to help your patients who work in nail salons understand if their medical complaint is related to their job. The following screening tool will help you identify occupational-related health impacts and connect patients with good occupational health resources.





ASIAN HEALTH SERVICES



NAIL SALON WORKER AND OWNER HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING

AHS developed the following training materials in partnership with the California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative and UC Berkeley's Labor Occupational Health Program:

- * **Booklet**, "Stay Healthy and Safe While Giving Manicures and Pedicures: A Guide for Nail Salon Workers" (available in English & Vietnamese), revised 2016
- * **Script for Worker Health and Safety Training**
- * **Flashcards**, "Let's Talk about Health and Safety" (available in English & Vietnamese)
- * **Cover sheet**
- * **Pre-tests**
- * **Post-tests**
- * **Sign-in sheet**
- * **Evaluation form**

A sample training agenda is as follows:

10:00 Welcome and Introductions

10:15 Overview of Nail Salon Training

*Overview and objectives of training
Overview of the curriculum
Questions from trainers*

10:30 Demonstration

*Healthy Nail Salons
Chemical safety
Ergonomic
Infectious diseases
Workers' rights
Injury and Illness Prevention Program
Green tips for your salon
Discussion*

12:30 Lunch

1:30 Documentation

1:45 Role play

2:55 Evaluation

3:00 Conclusion

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