

Hair Salons and Barber Shops



Region of Waterloo
PUBLIC HEALTH AND
EMERGENCY SERVICES

Lack of infection prevention practices at hair salons and barber shops can affect the health of the client and present a risk to the operator. Infections may be spread during procedures even when skin penetration does not occur.

You do not have to see blood or body fluids on the instruments for an infection to occur.

The following specific requirements in addition to general operational requirements apply to barber shops and hair salons. Refer to the *Infection Prevention and Control Best Practices for Personal Services Settings*, for a complete list of all requirements.

Infection Prevention and Control requirements

- Hands must be washed:
 - Before and after each client
 - Before and after wearing gloves
 - In between breaks in service
- Instruments such as scissors and hair clippers, which only contact hair and not skin, must be cleaned then disinfected using a low-level disinfectant between clients.
- Store clean and dirty items separately to prevent contamination
- Clippers, trimmers, edgers or scissors that nick or break the skin, must be cleaned then disinfected with an intermediate to high-level disinfectant prior to re-use.
- Re-usable straight blades for cutting hair must have a proper guard in place to prevent the blade from coming in contact with the skin.
- Single use, disposable blades used for shaving or barbering must be discarded in an approved sharps container immediately after use.
- Straight razors used for shaving must be single use or cleaned then sterilized in an autoclave between clients.
- Straight razors with a fixed blade are not recommended for use as they pose a safety hazard to the operator when cleaning.
- The handle and cradle of the straight razor, which holds the blade in place, must be cleaned then disinfected with an intermediate to high-level disinfectant.
- All needles used for hair weaves and extensions that contact the client or operator must be discarded in an approved sharps container immediately after contact.
- Crochet hooks used for cap highlights must be cleaned and disinfected with an intermediate to high level disinfectant.
- Reusable capes must be used with single-use neck strips or towels that are laundered after each client.
- Styptic pencils must not be used on clients. Use styptic in powder or liquid form with a disposable applicator.

Blood and body fluid exposure

- Document all client and operator exposure to blood and body fluid.
- Keep client and accidental blood and body fluids exposure records on site for a minimum of one year.
- Hepatitis B vaccination is strongly recommended for personal service providers.

Resource:

Ministry of Health and Long-term Care, Infection Prevention and Control Best Practices for Personal Services Settings, 2009.

Alternate formats of this document are available upon request.

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