

The Dangers of Methyl Methacrylate

Keeping Your Clients Educated

Recently, increasing problems with the use of methyl methacrylate, (MMA) in the nail industry has caused numerous problems for acrylic nail wearers. Many “discount” nail salons are using MMA instead of acrylic liquid to cut down on costs, (MMA is approximately \$180 cheaper per gallon than acrylic liquid.) This is why so many “discount” nail salons can charge such low prices.

The FDA has issued a warning to consumers that the use of MMA in discount nail salons is on the upswing, and is severely dangerous to unsuspecting clients. The best way to combat the problem with MMA is to recognize the warning signs.

- Tingling or numbness of the fingers
- Whitening of the fingers
- Damaged nail beds
- Irritated skin around the nail bed
- Salons using MMA will have a markedly different smell to them than regular acrylic

Other signs may include:

- Difficulty in removing your clients acrylic nails (The MMA acrylic combination has a much harder surface than the pure acrylic combination.)
- Employees in the salon tend to wear masks to avoid the poisonous chemicals MMA gives out

All these signs may indicate that your client has been to a salon using MMA.

It is important to educate your clients on the dangers of MMA.

A well-trained nail tech using FDA approved products and using proper sanitation methods will not be afraid to answer any questions asked by their clients. Keeping your clients informed and educated will not only keep them loyal, it will keep them safe.

On the following page, we have provided a sample flyer explaining the hazards of MMA to your clients. This flyer can be photocopied right out of the newsletter and handed out to your clients in order to keep them informed and educated!



The Importance of Sanitation

What Your Clients Need to Know

Across the country, unsuspecting consumers are having their nails done by unlicensed manicurists working in unsafe nail salons. What many consumers don't know is that they are putting themselves at risk of serious infection and disease whenever they go to these salons.

Recent news segments focused their attention on unsafe nail salons, showing working conditions that would make any legitimate nail tech cringe. Such conditions included working with dirty implements, filthy work stations, salons with no disinfectant available, unlicensed manicurists working on patrons, employees using illegal blades and needles as well as many other serious violations.

Although State Board Inspectors are trying to crack down on these nail salons, they can't keep up with all of them. Many salons continue to operate, despite numerous violations, putting their unknowing clients at risk for infection and disease.

Without proper sanitation methods, patrons have been known to develop serious infections in their hands and feet. Some infections can lead to the disfigurement or even the loss of fingers and toes.

One news program told the story of a customer who developed a severe infection in her foot after a razor blade was used to remove dead skin from her heels. The infection became so severe, she had to be hospitalized and is now in a wheelchair. Other severe cases of infection include Staph infections, Hepatitis and even AIDS.

It is important to let your customers know that not all nail salons operate under these conditions. Keeping your customers educated about the rules and regulations set by the State Board of Cosmetology will give them an idea of what to look for in a good nail salon. Namely yours!

On the following page we have provided a flyer on the importance of sanitation for you to photocopy and give to your clients.

The Dangers of Methyl Methacrylate

What You Can Do To Prevent Exposure.

What is Methyl Methacrylate? Methyl Methacrylate, (or MMA) is a liquid monomer banned for use in the nail industry by the Food and Drug Administration. MMA was used largely in the early 70's as an inexpensive substitute for conventional acrylic liquid. It was banned due to the severe poisonous reactions it caused in customers and nail techs.

Why should I be concerned? The use of MMA is on the rise in many "discount" nail salons to cut down on costs. (MMA is approximately \$180 cheaper per gallon than acrylic liquid.) This is one of the reasons why these types of salons can charge such low prices.

What are some of the signs I should be aware of? Nail salons using MMA will be very secretive about the brand names of the products they are using. Nail techs will wear masks to avoid the poisonous chemicals MMA gives out. Nails sculpted with MMA have a harder surface than regular acrylic nails and are very difficult and painful to remove. (Sometimes taking up to 2 hours.) Nail techs will use drills instead of files because the surface of the nail is so hard. There is also a distinctive odor to MMA which is different from regular acrylic.

What are some of the symptoms? Some of the symptoms caused by the use of MMA include, (1) tingling or numbness of the fingers, (2) whitening of the fingers, (3) Deformity of the fingernails, (4) Severe allergic reaction, or even contact dermatitis.

What can I do to prevent exposure? Recognizing the warning signs is the best way to prevent exposure. Always make sure your nail tech has his/her license visibly posted. Check to see if your nail tech is using products with name brand labels. Don't be afraid to ask your nail tech questions about their products and procedures. A properly trained nail tech will be more than happy to answer your questions.

Where can I get more information? You can contact the Food and Drug Administration at (800) 270-8869, or look up the FDA web page at www.FDA.gov.

Keeping it Clean

What You Should Know About Sanitation

Why should I worry about sanitation? All salons must follow the rules and regulations given to them by the State Board of Barbering and Cosmetology. Without proper sanitation methods, clients can be exposed to harmful bacteria which can cause serious infections. Many times, these infections, (such as Staph infections) can lead to the disfigurement of hands and feet and sometimes even the loss of fingers and toes. More severe cases can involve the contraction of Hepatitis, or even AIDS.

What are some of the violations I should be aware of? Unfortunately, the State Board can't keep up with every nail salon, and there are some salons that choose to ignore the rules. Some violations include not sanitizing implements, not washing hands before each client, dirty work stations, uncovered trash bins, reusing dirty paper towels and the illegal use of blades and needles.

What can I do to keep myself safe? Know what to look for whenever you go to a salon. Always take a look around the salon to make sure it is clean. Other signs to look for:

- Check to see that your nail technician has his/her license displayed. If it is not displayed, ask to see it.
- All implements and equipment should be properly sanitized before each use.
- Make sure nail technicians sanitize their hands before every client.
- Trash containers should have a proper lid.
- A nail technician should never use any type of blade or needle on you.
- All containers should be labeled with a manufacturer's name.

Not all nail salons choose to ignore the rules. A good nail technician cares about the quality of service you receive as well as your health and safety. Ask questions about disinfectants and proper procedures. Quality nail salons will be more than happy to answer your questions.

Where can I get more information? For more information on proper sanitation procedures, or if you want to report a salon you feel is unsafe, contact Consumer Affairs. You can also contact the State Board of Cosmetology or Better Business Bureau in your State. For State Board listings go to the 'Talk of the Town' index on Tammy's website at: <http://www.TammyTaylorNails.com>