



DALLAS COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Public Health Preparedness Division

ZACHARY THOMPSON, MA
DIRECTOR

JOHN CARLO, M.D., M.S.E.
MEDICAL DIRECTOR

Dallas County Health and Human Services Recommendations for Nail Salons

From February 2004 to January 2006, Dallas County Health and Human Services (DCHHS) received 19 reports of skin infections associated nail salon patronage. There are two different bacteria being associated with these infections, one being an *Atypical Mycobacteria* species and the other Methicillin *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA). Both of these bacteria are potentially dangerous pathogens, causing not only substantial skin and soft tissue infections, but in some cases, leading to further complications such as sepsis and death.

DCHHS has been working closely with the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) during this investigation. Skin infections from such pathogens as MRSA have become a common problem in the community, and we have undertaken numerous investigations involving outbreaks associated with a particular facility in the past. Facilities such as school locker rooms, jails, fitness centers, and yoga centers are some examples of locations where MRSA outbreaks have been previously identified. Outbreaks are usually mitigated through the recommendations of control measures which involve distancing body to body contact and removing common supplies, instruments, and towels. In particular to nail salons, we have concluded through our investigation there are certain basic measures to which nail salons should adhere to prevent such outbreaks. We offer the following recommendations to assist TDLR with the challenge of ensuring these establishments are properly minimizing the risk of communicable disease transmission.

1. Proper laundering of towels and lines remains an essential component of a safe establishment. The attached excerpt from the CDC's Environmental Recommendations for Health Care Facilities we feel is an appropriate guide as to the proper maintenance of clean and safe linens.
2. Nail salon employees should practice proper hand hygiene, as stated in Texas Administrative Code Chapter 83.103, for hair salons. This should include, but is not limited to, washing hands before and after each patron. DCHHS strongly recommends using alcohol based hand sanitizer because this has been proven to be more affective against antibiotic resistant organisms.
3. Open sores or wounds are significant sources for disease transmission. Therefore, all salon employees should cover any open cuts or sores while working. If an employee is unable to cover a sore or wound, they should be excluded from work until it is healed.
4. Policies should reflect the need to adhere to Texas Administrative Code Chapter 83.102 by posting a sign with wording such as: individuals with exposed wounds or sores should not have services rendered in this establishment.

We are also going to be recommending to the public, who wishes to use these facilities, some guidelines for individual protection. These guidelines will include:

1. Make sure that the establishment can demonstrate it is up to code but asking to review the appropriate documentation.
2. Insist that the technician washes his or her hands prior to your care.
3. Make sure all towels, instruments, and solutions are properly cleaned before your use.
4. Individuals who have chronic medical conditions which would predispose them to slow or difficult wound healing should not use the common foot baths.
5. Individuals who have wounds or ulcers which may be near the sites of treatment should not engage in nail salon usage.
6. We will urge all patrons to observe his or her environment, identify potential problems in a facility, and report such issues to both the management and TDLR.

We would like to thank our area TDRL representative, Mike Ruff, and his staff for their efforts during this investigation. DCHHS would also like to offer our continued support and guidance towards establishing safe nail salon establishments.