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10 Things *About...*

Sanitation in the Spa

by Lina Kennedy

Bacteria can come in many different shapes and sizes with varying degrees of severity. It is important to note that not all bacteria are bad, as many of them are helpful and essential to life. The difference between non-pathogenic and pathogenic bacteria is that non-pathogenic bacteria is considered useful, while pathogenic bacteria (such as germs) are more dangerous because they can carry diseases. When it comes to aesthetics, pathogenic bacteria presents reasons for concern.

1 Know the difference between sanitizing, disinfecting, and sterilizing. While there are different ways to clean products and the client's skin before treatments, the majority of these cleaning practices will fall into one of the three categories: sanitizing, disinfecting, and sterilizing. Sanitization removes many, but not all, microorganisms and can remove gross contamination. For sanitizing, water and soap is often used, similarly to washing the hands. In order to disinfect an object or surface, it must first be sanitized. Disinfection will remove microorganisms except endospores and viruses and involves actions such as boiling and using a variety of chemical products. Lastly, sterilization is the strongest form of cleaning and will kill all microorganisms, along with endospores and viruses. This is achieved through chemical sterilization, applying heat (steam, incineration), gas, and pressure.

2 Be informed on how bacteria can enter the body. There are only so many ways that bacteria can enter the body, including a break in the skin (such as a cut or scratch), the mouth via breathing, the nose, eyes, and ears. In aesthetics, each of these areas are vulnerable to bacteria; it is extremely important that professionals are aware of ways in which they can prevent bacterial contamination.



3 Disinfect products and work area both before and after use. An easy but crucial step in preventing contamination is to properly clean products such as tweezers, scissors, and clippers before and after treatments. This helps prevent the spread of bacteria from one client to another. To properly disinfect a product, first wash it with warm water and soap, followed by a disinfecting spray or detergent. The products used are not the only objects that need to be properly disinfected. Following each client, it is important to clean the work area including chairs, beds, and countertops.



4 Hands should be washed before and after treating clients, especially if gloves are not used. Because hands play a large role in aesthetics, professionals need to consistently wash and cleanse their hands before and after treatments. Even when wearing gloves, hands still need to be washed according to health codes. While not all treatments require or need gloves, consider it a strong form of added precaution.

10 Things about...

10 things *about...*

5 Keep an appropriate distance from the client. No matter what treatment is being performed, a reasonable amount of breathing space should be kept between the skin care professional and the client. For many treatments, such as eyelashes and manicures, wearing face masks has become the norm. Should the professional or the client be sick or feeling under the weather, wearing a mask is essential to preventing an illness from spreading.



6 Use fresh and clean linens for all clients. With every new client, be sure to change the linens. Once the client's treatment is done, place the dirty towels and linens in the proper container. Be sure that these clean and dirty containers are clearly labeled and closed according to health codes.



7 Try to use disposable equipment as much as possible. Utilizing disposables allows for quick and easy clean up. Disposable items such as sheets, underwear, and wraps can be used for a variety of treatments. Instead of washing the linens, simply have the client dispose of the garment. With disposables, be sure to have a designated trash can or bag so that the client easily knows where to dispose of the item.

8 Before treatments, examine the client's skin for signs of visible infection or skin disorders. Always refer clients to a physician if anything is found that is not recognizable. Skin care professionals should never diagnose clients, even if they think they recognize a medical condition. The presence of either of the above can help to better determine how to prevent bacterial contamination and which steps to take for proper sanitation.

9 Try to use products that utilize pumps. Products such as creams or liquids are best when they come in the form of pumps because there is never a need for the professional's or the client's hand to come in direct contact with the opening of the pump. This prevents possible contamination through constant direct contact with the product.



10 Be sure to have and follow proper documents and procedures. Be aware of all documents and procedures required by the state board. These will give detailed information on what is expected by the state. In addition, it is also good to keep the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) on hand for all the products being used. The MSDS will provide detailed information on the safety guidelines as to how to use professional products. Finally, always follow the manufacturer's instructions.



Lina Kennedy is a chief pioneer collecting many feathers in her cap. An expert on professional sugaring, Kennedy regularly writes articles for industry magazines in North America and Europe. As president of Alexandria Professional, one of her personal goals is to ensure that each professional trained in the art of body sugaring learns and understands the exceptional results that they and their clients can achieve through The Kennedy Theory™ for sugaring and The Kennedy Technique Theory™.

