

Facials

A facial is a multi-step procedure that involves cleansing, massaging, and treating specific conditions on a client's face. Facials are performed manually and/or using facial equipment or machines. The service usually involves the top layer of skin (epidermis) but may be more invasive, involving the use of equipment to remove whiteheads, blackheads and/or chemical peels (e.g., alpha hydroxyl products) that break the skin barrier.

Infection Risks

Blood or body fluids do not need to be visible on equipment for microorganisms to enter the body at the procedure site and cause an infection. Potential sources of these microorganisms include:

- Contaminated or improperly reprocessed equipment
- Contaminated topical products
- Unclean hands touching the treated area.

Additional Considerations

Equipment:

- Single-use gloves or finger cots are to be worn when touching non-intact skin (e.g., during extractions).
- Single-use items (e.g., sponges, sharps) are to be discarded after use.
- Pre-packaged, single-use sterile needles or lancets used for extractions or to expose ingrown hairs are to be discarded in an approved biohazard (sharps) container after use. Tweezers are not to be used for extractions or to expose ingrown hairs.
- Reusable instruments and equipment (e.g., comedone extractors, facial rollers, and microdermabrasion tips) are to be cleaned and disinfected after use.
- Cloth towels, sheets and linens are to be laundered or placed in a designated receptacle for items awaiting laundering after each use.
- Single-use items (e.g., massage table paper coverings) are to be discarded after the service and are not to be re-used.
- Facial equipment is to be used, stored, maintained, cleaned, and disinfected and replaced in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions for use (MIFU).
- Facial steamers are to be used and maintained in a sanitary manner, and according to manufacturer's instructions. Water (preferably distilled) is to be replaced daily, at a minimum. Water in the reservoir of the unit is not to be topped up. The reservoir is to be emptied of water, cleaned and disinfected prior to refilling, as per MIFU.
- Microneedle rollers are ideally to be provided as individually pre-packaged, sterile. If these are purchased unsterilized, these are to be reprocessed using a high-level disinfectant prior to use.

- Detachable microneedle roller heads are to be discarded into an approved biohazard (sharps) container after use and the reusable handle high-level disinfected. Microneedle rollers that are a single unit (i.e., those where the roller head is not detachable from the handle) are to be discarded in an approved biohazard (sharps) container after use or given to the client to take home. These are not to be brought back to the premises for use at a later date, including for re-use on the same client.
- Topical products (e.g., creams, lotions) are to be maintained, decanted and used in a sanitary manner that avoids contamination of the remaining product (i.e., no “double dipping”). If products are decanted from a larger container, leftover, unused product is to be discarded.

Client Safety:

- Operators are to assess the integrity of a client’s skin prior to performing a facial. Services are to be refused or deferred if skin is inflamed or infected, or if a client presents with a rash or open wounds.
- If applicable, operators are to provide clients with aftercare information or special considerations following the treatment.

Reprocessing Classification

Semi-critical	Non-critical	Various
High-Level Disinfection	Low-Level Disinfection	Single-Use, Disposable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microneedle roller handles (if roller head is detachable) • Comedone extractors • Glass and metal probes • Equipment that contacts non-intact skin (e.g., acne treatments, microdermabrasion tip, holder and hose) ‡ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tables, chairs, beds • Rigid containers used to hold dirty equipment (at end of day) • Service trays • Facial steamer machine and reservoir • Product dispensing tools/spatula • Bowls • Jade/rose quartz facial rollers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lancets* • Needles* • Wooden applicators • Cotton pads or balls • Finger cots • Sponges • Single-use personal protective equipment (gloves, masks, gowns, eye protection) • Bed/pillow covers (paper) • Cloth linen and towels - laundered after each use • Microneedle rollers (if roller head and handle are a single unit) • Microneedle roller heads (detachable)

* These items are to be sterile prior to use

‡ If the equipment only contacts intact skin then an intermediate-level disinfectant may be used.

Sources

1. Health and Wellness, Alberta. (2002, June). Health Standards and Guidelines for Esthetics. Retrieved from <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/af4309b7-85fd-40e2-9f9a-6eeefba6d261/resource/66d43fe8-be2d-4528-92df-258b1d12c429/download/standards-esthetics.pdf>
2. Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). Guide to infection prevention and control in personal service settings. 3rd ed., 1st revision. Toronto, ON: Queen’s Printer for Ontario; 2019.
3. Region of Peel. (2011, May 6). Facials. Retrieved from <http://www.peelregion.ca/health/pss/edm-facials.htm>

This fact sheet is based on PSS best practice recommendations, current reprocessing standards and legislation. It is not an inclusive list of all requirements. Operators are responsible to ensure that all services are offered according to local requirements, best practices and legislation.