

## Hair Salons and Barber Shops

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Hair services include shampooing, cutting, and styling of hair on a person's head and/or face. Examples of styling are: permanent or temporary hair colouring, a wet shave with a straight razor, weaves sewn into short braided hair, and/or extensions attached to shorter hair on the scalp.

### Infection Risks

While the risk of infection associated with barbering and hairstyling is low, procedures involving the use of a razor, scissors or other sharp instrument carry the risk of cutting a client. The open wound created by an accidental cut to a client's skin may allow the entry of microorganisms. Potential sources of these microorganisms include:

- Contaminated or improperly reprocessed equipment.
- The client's own bacteria from different parts of the body.
- Contaminated environment.
- Unclean hands touching the cut area.

Barbering using a razor has been associated with bacterial infections (e.g., skin infections caused by *Serratia marcescens*) and viral infections (e.g., hepatitis B, hepatitis C). Transmission of an infection of methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) onto a client's hairline through inadequately reprocessed hairdressing equipment has also been reported.

### Additional Considerations

#### Equipment:

- Operators are to follow manufacturer's instructions for the dilution, preparation, use and replacement of disinfectant products provided in concentrated form in order to ensure their appropriate dilution and use.
- Reusable instruments and equipment (e.g., tweezers, combs, and handles for shaving razors with disposable blades) are to be properly cleaned and disinfected after use. Straight razors with a fixed blade (non-detachable from the handle) are not recommended.
- Cloth towels are to be laundered or placed in designated receptacle for items awaiting laundering after each client.
- If facial waxing is performed, a new single-use applicator is to be used for each wax application (e.g., no double-dipping).
- Single-use items (e.g., paper neck strips, waxing strips, waxing applicator strips) are to be discarded after use and are not to be re-used.
- Sharps (e.g., razor blades, needles/lancets used to expose ingrown hairs prior to waxing or shaving) are to be discarded in an approved biohazard container after use.

## Client Safety:

- Operators are to assess the integrity of a client's skin prior to performing a hairdressing/hair styling, waxing or shaving service. 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 a client sustains a nick or other injury that draws blood during the service, operators are to provide a client with appropriate first aid (e.g., application of antiseptic and an adhesive dressing) and to document the accidental exposure. If styptic is applied to stop client bleeding, this must be dispensed aseptically, using a single-use applicator. Styptic pencils are not recommended.

## Reprocessing Classification

Semi-critical	Non-critical	Non-critical	Various
<i>High-Level Disinfection</i>	<i>Intermediate-Level Disinfection</i>	<i>Low-Level Disinfection</i>	<i>Single-Use, Disposable</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tweezers used to expose ingrown hairs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tweezers used to remove hair from the hair follicle</li> <li>• Scissors used to cut hair ‡</li> <li>• Crochet hooks for cap highlights ‡</li> <li>• Hair clipper blades ‡</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tables, chairs, hair sinks</li> <li>• Combs, brushes</li> <li>• Reusable colour mixing bowls</li> <li>• Crochet hooks for cap highlights ‡</li> <li>• Hair clipper blades ‡</li> <li>• Hair clipper guards and shaver guards</li> <li>• Hair rollers, clips and caps</li> <li>• Handles for hairstyling &amp; shaving razors</li> <li>• Scissors used to cut hair ‡</li> <li>• Scissors used to cut single-use wax strips</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicator used to apply styptic powder or liquid to stop bleeding</li> <li>• Gloves</li> <li>• Hair threading or weaving needles</li> <li>• Neck strip</li> <li>• Single use crochet hooks for cap highlights, and cap</li> <li>• Single use disposable razors and/or blades</li> <li>• Styptic products</li> <li>• Eyebrow razors</li> <li>• Lancets and needles used to remove ingrown hairs*</li> <li>• Waxing applicator strips</li> <li>• Waxing strips</li> </ul>

‡ If instruments nick the skin, the higher level of disinfection is required.

\* These items are to be sterile prior to use

## Sources

1. Environmental Protection Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter E. 19.
2. Health Protection and Promotion Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.H.7; O. Reg. 136/18: Personal Service Settings.
3. 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.

*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.*