

# BARBICIDE.

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **BE AWARE, BE SAFE**

*Questions to ask on your next visit to the salon or spa.*

**Milwaukee, WI (July 19, 2009)** – Most people would be shocked to find out that the treatments they undergo to enhance their beauty—such as haircuts, manicures and pedicures—can quickly turn ugly if proper disinfection techniques are not followed. Horror stories abound, such as the woman who ended up with greenish goo oozing out from under the nail of a toe, swollen five times its size, after a pedicure gone wrong. Or the 110 customers who all experienced a skin disease that included prolonged breakouts of boils below the knees and left some with scars after soaking their feet in whirlpool footbaths that were rarely cleaned.

Research has confirmed that hair and nail salons may be a source of blood-borne diseases caused by viruses, as well as serious bacterial infections. There is strong evidence that contaminated cosmetic instruments, including scissors, nail files, cuticle cutters and other sharp tools used in salons, are risk factors for transmitting viruses such as Hepatitis B and C and even HIV. Other research shows that Hepatitis B can survive outside the body for seven days or more on tools, worktables, headrests and chairs.

However, if customers suffer a nick, burn, scrape or scratch at the salon, they are more likely to experience infections caused by bacteria and fungi. Bacteria can be found just about anywhere—under fingernails, on the skin, manicure tables, tools, chairs, keyboards, phones and computers. From common bacterial infections like Staph to life-threatening MRSA (Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*), germs are everywhere. MRSA are very widespread bacteria that live on the skin and in the nose of healthy people without doing harm. However, they are similar to viruses in that they can cause infections if they enter the body through a wound or contaminated instrument.

Just because a salon is licensed doesn't necessarily mean it's safe. Here are questions you should ask to protect yourself:

- **Is your hair stylist or nail technician washing their hands between clients?**

Hand washing with an antibacterial soap cuts down on bacteria, including Staph, that can be found on the hands. Since regular hand washing can be a challenge, alcohol-

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and scent-free Barbicide® Hand Sanitizer kills germs in less than 30 seconds, yet is gentle on your hands. Furthermore, during manicures, each customer should be given a fresh bowl of soapy water to soak her nails.

- **How are hair styling tools and nail implements disinfected?**

Styling tools can carry germs that lead to fungal infections like ringworm and dandruff, as well as lice. Contaminated nail files and cuticle instruments are also culprits when it comes to spreading infections. Every state requires the use of an EPA-approved, hospital grade disinfectant. Scissors, clippers, combs and brushes should be totally immersed. Ask to see the product's label. Disinfectants such as Barbicide® will include the words "germicide," "bactericide," "fungicide" or "virucide," indicating it is strong enough to kill germs. If you notice that your salon is reusing combs and brushes, bring your own.

- **How often does your salon clean the foot spa?**

Foot spas should be disinfected between clients and at the end of the day. The filtration screens should be removed and cleaned periodically.

Note: Do not shave your legs on the day of a pedicure. Even a tiny cut can give infection-causing bacteria a point of entry.

- **Does your salon use a foot scraper to remove rough skin and calluses?**

If your salon uses one, make sure it is disinfected. A cuticle cutter can also slice into skin very easily. If your cuticles are too long, ask your technician to gently push them back ... or do it at home with your own tools.

- **Is your salon reusing items that should be thrown away?**

Some items can't be disinfected, such as emery boards, nail-buffer blocks and nail brushes. These items should be thrown out immediately. To be certain you're safe, bring your own.

- **Is your technician double-dipping the waxing sticks?**

That's a big no-no since the customers before you may have had viral warts, Staph or herpes living on their skin. To avoid infection, ask for a fresh wax stick at every visit. If you are getting a bikini wax, check to see if the technician is wearing disposable gloves, and make sure the towel or paper on the table beneath you is clean.

Note: Waxing, especially bikini waxes, can also lead to little red bumps on the skin called folliculitis, which occur when bacteria get into your hair follicles, causing a localized infection. To prevent folliculitis, gently wash the freshly waxed area with soap and water, apply a dab of antibiotic ointment, and keep it clean and dry.

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- **Does your salon use an electric drill during the application of acrylic nails?**

Health experts advise against it. If they insist upon using an electric drill, make sure they are properly disinfected or bring your own drill bits to avoid infection.

- **Is your salon sharing towels?**

Towels and robes can carry germs, especially if they are damp. They should be laundered after every use.

- **Is the bathroom clean?**

If the bathroom is out of paper towels or soap, or the sink is scummy and there are hair clippings on the floor, it gives you a good idea of what priority your salon places on cleanliness.

- **Does the salon smell funny?**

Chemical odors are a sign of poor ventilation. Inhaling strong fumes can make you sick.

These tips and many more are what Alan Murphy, president of King Research, discusses with cosmetology students, salon professionals and salon owners as he travels the globe. He is fueled by an unwavering passion to educate salon owners and beauty schools on the importance of disinfection to help reduce the risk of infection.

According to Murphy, “The public walks into a salon and assumes it’s a safe environment, but it may not be. Don’t be afraid to ask your stylist what disinfection practices they use. Teen girls are especially at risk, so moms need to talk with their daughters about the risk of infection. It’s the same as a parent telling their child to put on a helmet before riding their bike. It’s all about safety for the customer.”

For more information on Barbicide products, visit [www.barbicide.com](http://www.barbicide.com), or call 1-800-222-8160 or (414) 977-1449.

## **About King Research**

Founded in 1947, King Research is the global leader in disinfecting and cleaning solutions for salon professionals. Known for their distinctly blue Barbicide® disinfectant solution, the company continues to grow with their new Barbicide product line including Wipes, Hand Sanitizer and Bullets, as well as Ship-Shape® Professional Surface Cleaner. Headquartered in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, King Research reported more than 30 percent growth from 2006 to 2008, with future plans to expand their business in healthcare, agriculture and education.

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