

# Care of Hairdressing Equipment

Note: Terms are defined in the **Definitions** section.

If you have any questions or comments, contact IPC at [ipcsurvstdadmin@ahs.ca](mailto:ipcsurvstdadmin@ahs.ca).

## Best practice recommendations

### Purpose

Hairstyling services have been regulated under the Public Health Act since 1925. Combs, brushes, and towels have demonstrated a risk of disease transmission disease such as ringworm, head lice, herpes, staphylococcus and streptococcus. Instruments such as razors, scissors, and clippers have the potential of breaking the skin's surface and come into contact with blood or body fluids. This provides the opportunity for the spread of such infections as HIV and hepatitis.

### Application

These recommendations should be followed by all Alberta Health Services (AHS) staff, medical staff, volunteers, students and other persons acting on behalf of AHS who are providing hairdressing services to clients within Calgary Zone AHS facilities.

### IPC practices

1. [Routine Practices](#) help prevent the spread of infections and are used at all times, including [Point Of Care Risk Assessment](#), [Hand Hygiene](#) and [Personal Protective Equipment](#). Additional precautions requiring personal protective equipment such as masks, gown, and eye protection may be indicated by a point of care risk assessment to prevent transmission of specific organisms or infections that may not be fully prevented by routine practices.
  - 1.1. Hand hygiene, see [AHS Hand Hygiene Policy](#) and [Hand Hygiene Procedure](#) for more details.
  - 1.2. A [Point of Care Risk Assessment \(PCRA\)](#) is conducted at the start of each staff and client interaction to evaluate the likelihood of exposure to blood and body fluids.
  - 1.3. [Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](#) appropriate for the task and to minimize the risk of exposure to infectious agents, for example:
    - Gloves, gown, mask, and eye protection as needed to prevent contact with blood and body fluids, excretions, secretions, mucous membranes or non-intact skin.
2. Handling client care items and equipment
  - 2.1. Discard items labelled as [single-use](#) after each use.
  - 2.2. Health Canada, Canadian Standards Association (CSA) and Alberta Health standards require reusable medical equipment to have validated cleaning and disinfection/sterilization instructions.
  - 2.3. All disinfectants must have a Drug Identification Number (DIN) from Health Canada.

### Recommendations

- All combs, brushes, scissors, and rollers shall be **cleaned** and **disinfected** with a **low level disinfectant** (i.e., quaternary ammonium, 3% hydrogen peroxide, or 1:500 dilution of bleach) after each use following manufacturer's instructions.
- Electric clippers must have removable heads that can be removed and disinfected between clients.
- Electric clippers and blades shall be cleaned and disinfected with an intermediate level disinfectant (i.e., 70-90% isopropyl alcohol, 70-90% ethyl alcohol, or 1:50 dilution of bleach) after each use following manufacturer's instructions.

For more information contact  
[ipcsurvstdadmin@ahs.ca](mailto:ipcsurvstdadmin@ahs.ca)  
© 2020 Alberta Health Services

Original date: September 2016  
Revised date: June 2020

- Any additional equipment that comes into contact with non-intact skin, blood and body fluid shall be cleaned and disinfected with an intermediate level disinfectant after each use following manufacturer's instructions.
- Razor blades used for shaving shall be single-use and discarded immediately after each use.
- The neck rest and hair washing bowl shall be cleaned and disinfected with a low level disinfectant between clients following manufacturer's instructions.
- Separate towels must be used for each client and sent for commercial laundering.
- Disposable neck strip or clean towel shall be used under reusable cape for each client.
- Hairdressing/barbering should not be completed on clients with suspected or confirmed scalp infections and/or infestations.
- Use proper hand hygiene techniques and hairdresser/barber must have intact skin on their hands themselves.
- Clean items must be stored separately from dirty items to prevent cross contamination.
- Any questions relating to practices pertaining to infection prevention and control should be directed to the site Infection Control Professional.

### Definitions

**Cleaning:** is the removal of soil. Soil includes, but is not limited to, the bioburden plus client-derived cells, secretions or excretions. The surface of an item cannot be disinfected properly until the cleaning process is completed appropriately.

**Disinfection:** is a process that destroys some forms of microorganisms excluding bacterial spores; a process that kills most forms of microorganisms on inanimate surfaces.

**Low-level disinfectant:** means a substance, or mixture of substances, capable of destroying or irreversibly inactivating, at a minimum, vegetative bacteria.

**Intermediate-level disinfectant:** means a substance, or mixture of substances, capable of destroying or irreversibly inactivating all microbial pathogens, including mycobacteria but not bacterial spores.

**Single-use:** a device that is designated by its manufacturer for single-use and may be indicated by, but not limited to, the following terms used for labelling by the manufacturer:

- disposable;
- consumable;
- not for reuse or do not reuse;
- discard after single-use;
- do not use twice, or
- a symbol such as. 

*Please follow additional guidelines from Health Canada or IP&C with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic.*

For more information contact  
[ipcsurvstdadmin@ahs.ca](mailto:ipcsurvstdadmin@ahs.ca)  
© 2020 Alberta Health Services

Original date: September 2016  
Revised date: June 2020

### References

- Alberta Health and Wellness (2002). Health Standards and Guidelines for Barbering and Hairstyling.
- Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care – Ontario (2009). Infection Prevention and Control Best Practices for Personal Services Settings
- Ministry of Health and Ministry Responsible for Seniors (2000). Guidelines for Personal Service Establishments (PSEs).

*Please follow additional guidelines from Health Canada or IP&C with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic.*

For more information contact  
[ipcsurvstdadmin@ahs.ca](mailto:ipcsurvstdadmin@ahs.ca)  
© 2020 Alberta Health Services

Original date: September 2016  
Revised date: June 2020