

razors. If you do use straight-edged razors, choose single use disposable blades, and clean and disinfect the blade handle, as described above, between each client.

6. Refuse to cut cuticles.

7. Utilise single-use, disposable needles and ink pots, and autoclave tools between each client in tattooing and piercing salons (“*Doctors warn tattoos, piercing can be dangerous to your health,*” *New York Amsterdam News, 11-18-95, pp PG.*)

8. If you cannot autoclave the tattoo gun, use a disposable, protective, plastic cover so that any blood spatter on the mantle of the gun is collected on the plastic and disposed of, before the gun is used on a subsequent client (*Dr. Mark Bigham, BCCDC*).

9. Don't dip clean tattooing needles into previously used ink.

10. Use latex gloves. Wash hands and put on a fresh pair of gloves between each client.

11. Clean and disinfect surfaces and non-disposable items between clients.



Disclaimer: HepCBC will not be responsible for any damage resulting from the information in this pamphlet. Please consult a physician for medical advice.

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For Further Information,
contact your public health
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HEPATICITIS C
THE



BEAUTY INDUSTRY



What is Hepatitis C ?

Hepatitis C is a disease of the liver caused by the hepatitis C virus (HCV). Hepatitis C was identified in 1989. Before 1989, this type of hepatitis was called non-A, non-B hepatitis, meaning that it was not caused by the viruses that produce hepatitis A or hepatitis B (two other viruses that can cause liver inflammation).

The hepatitis C virus is now recognised as a world-wide epidemic, infecting 1 in 70 people world-wide. That means there are 10 times as many people infected with Hep C as with the AIDS virus. Probably 85% or more of those infected remain so for the remainder of their lives. The disease produced by the virus can lead to liver failure, cirrhosis, liver cancer & death.

How is Hepatitis C spread?

The virus is usually spread by direct contact with the blood of an infected person. This happens most often by:

Sharing drug snorting or injection equipment such as straws and syringes.

Having received a transfusion of blood or blood product in a country where the blood supply was not tested for hepatitis C. In Canada, this applies to transfusions before 1990. As of March 1990 all blood and blood products have been screened for HCV—but a very small risk still remains.

Needlestick injuries.

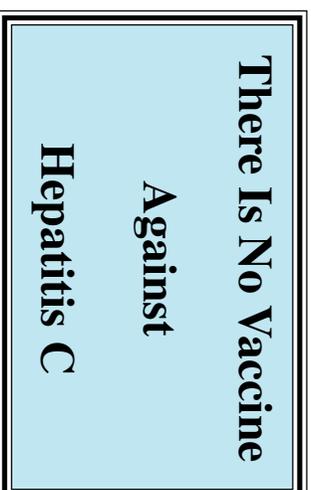
Sharing toothbrushes, dental floss, razors, nail files, hair trimmers, scissors, combs, or other items which could have tiny amounts of blood on them.

Skin piercing procedures, such as tattoos, body-piercing, acupuncture or electrolysis, if the equipment is not sterile.

Sexual intercourse (rarely).

An infected mother passing it to her new-born infant. Whether breast milk can transmit the virus is not yet known.

Although a significant number (10-40%) of Hep C carriers don't know how they contracted the disease, avoiding these situations can help to prevent the spread of hepatitis C.



Experts speculate that the virus may be spread through invasive procedures such as those performed in the field of medicine and the beauty industry.

Given these facts, it is important that professionals involved in these fields take all available precautions so as to stop the spread of this as well as other emerging epidemics. Normal cleaning and sterilisation recommendations (described below) are effective, provided they are carefully and consistently followed.

We recommend that you:

1. Consult with your local public health unit/department about the precautions to use in your profession.

2. Before disinfection, pre-clean/wash items in fresh soap & water to remove visible contamination.

3. Use heat to disinfect blood-contaminated items, such as an autoclave, and follow manufacturer's recommendations. Alternatively, use a 1:10 to 1:100 dilution of 5% household bleach and immerse items for at least 10 minutes. Rinse items well with water. Make up a fresh bottle of bleach solution each day, and shield it from any light. ("Hepatitis C: Risk of a Haircut," by Gitlin, Nole, and Weiss, Emory University School of Medicine, and "Dental instrument and device sterilization and disinfection practices," *J Hosp Infect* 1996 Apr Issue: 4 Volume: 32 pp 295-304)

4. Have your client bring his/her own manicure or pedicure tools.

5. Eliminate the use of straight-edged