

Hands Together for Nail Salon Wellness

*A guide for manicurists to protect and understand
their overall health and well-being*



**CA HEALTHY
NAIL SALON
COLLABORATIVE**

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HELLO!



This booklet is for manicurists. This will help you learn more about how working in a nail salon may affect your overall health. This booklet also includes information on how to protect yourself in the workplace, including your reproductive health.

Disclaimer: This is for educational purposes and is not intended to replace professional medical care. Please consult your medical health providers for any further inquiries about your reproductive health.

GLOSSARY

ABORTION | The medical process that ends a pregnancy

BIRTH COMPLICATIONS | Problems that may happen during pregnancy or childbirth that affect the health of the parent or baby

FETAL VIABILITY | The stage of pregnancy where a fetus has developed enough to possibly survive outside of the uterus, with or without medical assistance

MISCARRIAGE | The loss of a pregnancy before the 20th week, naturally occurring

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH | A state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being relating to the reproductive system and its functions and processes

REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE | The human right to maintain personal bodily autonomy, have children, not have children, and parent the children we have in safe and sustainable communities

THE NAIL SALON W O R K F O R C E



The nail salon workforce includes Asian, immigrant, and refugee women who are mostly working class and of reproductive age.

The nail salon community in California:**



85% **women**

84% **Asian**

Ages including **16-60+ years old**

81% born **outside of the U.S.**

82% born in **Vietnam**

** From: Nail Files California: A Study of Nail Salon Workers and Industry (2024).

WHAT IS NAIL SALON WELLNESS?

It is crucial to ensure that manicurists know and understand the potential risks and harm in the workplace to protect themselves better, feel empowered, and prepared to access their reproductive health needs.

In the workplace, manicurists are exposed to harmful chemicals from the products they use.

These chemicals can enter the body through the mouth, nose, and eyes. It can be absorbed into your clothes and your skin.



How do these chemicals enter my body?

COMMON HEALTH ISSUES

Overexposure to harmful chemicals can lead to poor health outcomes. Ignoring the symptoms can lead to long-term health impacts if they are not treated or addressed promptly.

Acute Symptoms

- Headaches, shortness of breath, coughing, chest tightness, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, and more

Long-term health impacts

- Asthma, reproductive health issues such as complications during pregnancy and birth defects among children

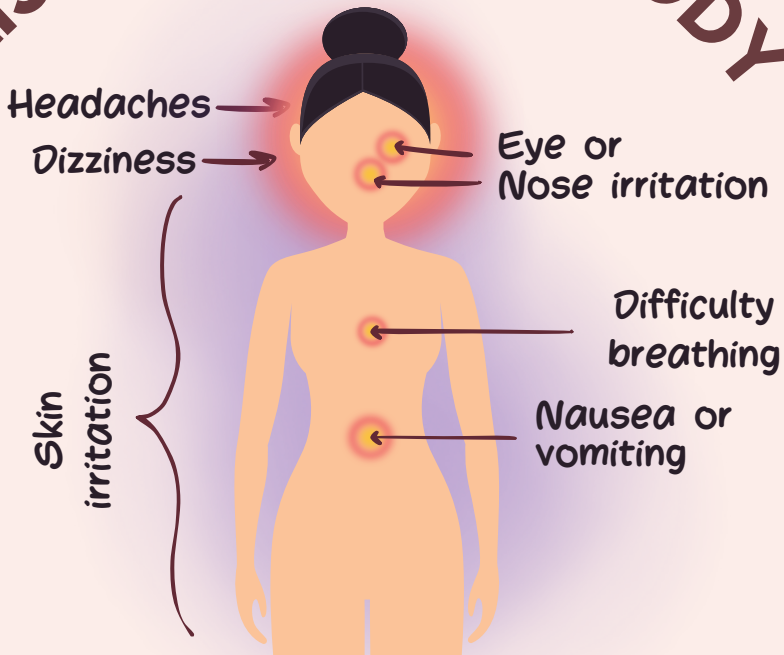


What happens
if I don't wear
any protective
equipment?

Ergonomic Issues

- Wrist, back, or shoulder pain

LISTEN TO YOUR BODY



The impact of harmful chemical exposure can manifest as irritated, itchy, or dry skin; difficulty breathing; and irritated or watery eyes.

Feelings of nausea, dizziness, or headaches can be a significant sign of high chemical exposure.

KNOW THE INGREDIENTS IN YOUR PRODUCTS



It is important to be aware of potentially harmful ingredients, especially the **'toxic trio'**. These ingredients can be found in acetone, nail polish thinners, gel polish, lacquer, and more.

Nail workers increase their risks of health complications when working in poorly ventilated spaces for hours at a time.



FORMALDEHYDE

DIBUTYL PHTHALATE

TOLUENE

PROTECT YOURSELF

Manicurists can be exposed to biological hazards, such as bacteria, fungi, or viruses. You can be at higher risk for hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and human immunodeficiency viruses (HIV) if you are in contact with infected blood.

You can reduce exposure to harmful chemicals and risk of infectious diseases by implementing safe practices in the workplace.



Wear protective gear and clothing



Know the ingredients in your products



Wash your hands before you eat or touch your face



Have good ventilation



Properly dispose of toxic wastes

Label products appropriately



REPRODUCTIVE Health & Justice

Reproductive Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being relating to the reproductive system and its functions and processes.



Reproductive Justice is the human right to maintain personal bodily autonomy, have children, not have children, and parent the children we have in safe and sustainable communities.



HOW ARE MANICURISTS AT RISK?



Manicurists in CA are at risk of reproductive harm from long periods of exposure to harmful chemicals in the workplace.



They are less likely to seek reproductive health services and education because they do not want to miss work and lose any income.

It is important to prioritize our health to avoid any long-term and damaging health outcomes. We all deserve to live long and healthy lives!

KNOW THE REPRODUCTIVE BIRTH AND

Understanding your body and health can help you prevent health complications, especially if you are working as a manicurist during pregnancy.

Without following safety protocols when handling harmful chemicals, you may put yourself at risk for reproductive health issues. A few examples can be endometriosis, uterine cancer, or miscarriage.

Endometriosis

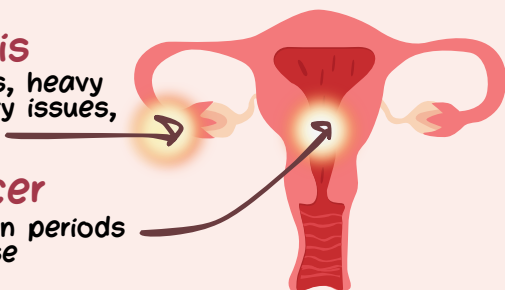
pelvic pain, cramps, heavy periods and fertility issues,

Uterine Cancer

bleeding in between periods or after menopause

Miscarriage

loss of a pregnancy before 20 weeks' gestation (most often in first trimester)



RISKS

HEALTH COMPLICATIONS

Long periods of chemical exposure to toxic chemicals, such as the “**toxic trio**,” can lead to birth or health complications for manicurists, especially when working while pregnant.

Studies have shown manicurists are at higher risk for developing **gestational diabetes** than the general population.

Other health complications include:

Placenta previa

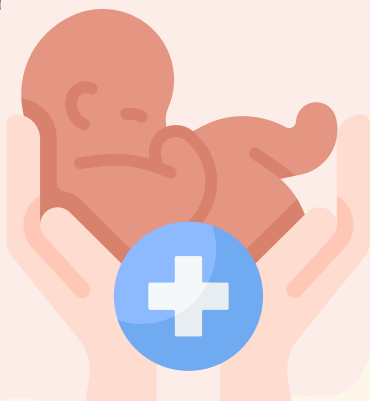
placenta blocks all or part of your baby's exit from your vagina

Congenital heart defects

a problem with the structure of the heart that a child is born with

Small for Gestational Age

describes babies who are smaller than usual for the number of weeks of pregnancy



Reproductive Justice for Manicurists Looks like...



Nail salon workers are well-informed about the risks and harms in the workplace.



Health-related resources or brochures, classes or information is accessible in your language



A safe environment to talk about health concerns with trusted support systems and/or healthcare providers.



Childcare services throughout any stage of life for families or single caretakers is affordable.



Sexual health education, such as, sexually transmitted infection [STI] prevention, sexual violence and abuse prevention, are offered and accessible to everyone.



Should I work
while I am
pregnant?

If you are curious about getting pregnant or actively trying, **consult with a medical professional you trust.**

They can answer questions or better prepare you for your overall pregnancy journey.

Reach out to trusted community organizations for resources or guidance for additional support.



TALKING TO A **TRUSTED HEALTHCARE** PROVIDER

A trusted provider, such as a doctor or nurse, can educate you about the overall risks, benefits, and alternatives of any procedures or interventions related to your health.

Do your options align with your values?

- Feeling prepared to make informed decisions about your care, in collaboration with your provider;
- Giving your informed consent before entering any procedure or treatment.

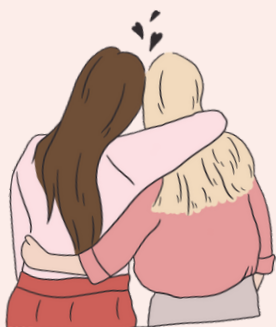


TALKING TO SOMEONE YOU TRUST

This could be someone in your **family, your friend, colleague, partner**, or whoever you feel **most comfortable** and **safe** with.

This person, regardless of your decision, will support you without any **judgement** or **criticism** to your decision.

Talking to someone that supports you no matter what, can help you through the unfamiliar and challenging situations with your reproductive and overall health.



SHARED DECISION- MAKING IS...



Between you and your medical provider,
but **YOU** are the sole decision-maker:

*You understand all treatment options
and their risks and benefits.*

*You are able to evaluate your options
for short-term and long-term goals.*

*You are able to communicate openly
and honestly with your provider.*

*You feel in control of your own
decisions.*

DON'T FORGET

Proper protection and safety practices are important to reduce your risk of reproductive harm.

Long-term exposure to nail product chemicals increases the risk of pregnancy complications such as stillbirth, miscarriage, gestational diabetes, or cognitive impacts in your child.

DID YOU KNOW?

Having a baby is a team effort, and both parents' health and lifestyle are also important in getting pregnant and having a healthy baby.





Who is allowed
to have an
abortion?

ABORTION

Care &

Reproductive Justice includes having access and resources to abortion.

Abortion The medical process of ending a pregnancy before the baby can live outside the womb.

In California, abortion is legal and is covered through **Medi-Cal, Private Insurance**, and **ACA Marketplace Plans**.

Abortions can be done before **24 weeks of pregnancy**.**

After 24 weeks, the fetus can survive on its own, which is known as **fetal viability**.





When can I
have an
abortion?



Is abortion
safe?

Access



Abortion is a **normal** part of the full spectrum reproductive healthcare.



Abortion is safe. People can also safely manage their abortions with prescribed medication.



There's no "**good**" or "**bad**" reason for abortions.



Insurance coverage should always include coverage for abortion.



You have the right to make the decision on when to have an abortion within your state's legal limits for **fetal viability**.



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS



You have the right to choose to have or not to have a child.

Pregnant people in California have the right to choose to have an abortion **regardless** of your reason.

You have the right to decide which services you want, and don't want, related to sexual and reproductive health.

Your medical records are private, regardless of your policy holder status. Your history of "sensitive service," including abortion care **cannot** be shared.

RESOURCES



Scan for more reproductive and health resources:



Find all your abortion options:

www.ineedana.com/search

Californians who have been the victim or target of deceptive, misleading, unfair, or unlawful conduct should immediately file a complaint at:

oag.ca.gov/crisis-pregnancy-center-complaint_



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