

**[a guide to
keep your
salon safe]**

SAFETY FIRST

It's the end of a long day. You're filing toenails and tired when your file slips and slices into the toe, drawing blood. What do you do? An elderly client stumbles and takes a bad fall to the ground. What do you do? A fellow nail tech is pregnant and working beside you when her water suddenly breaks. What do you do? BY TIM CROWLEY

Accidents and emergencies in salons can happen. Some will be more common and less severe, like nicks on the hands or feet, while other more dramatic scenarios may never happen while you're on the job. But it's important for you to know how to handle both extremes — and all the

accidents in between — just in case. We talked to doctors, the American Red Cross, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), as well as the Center for Disease Control (CDC), to provide you with some basic tips on how to properly address injuries that may happen in your salon.



The more **common injuries:**

A CUT ON A FINGER OR TOE

- ✦ Wash the area with soap and water or hydrogen peroxide.
- ✦ Dress with a topical antibiotic and a bandage.
- ✦ Instruct the client to do the same for the next three days.

A BREAK IN THE NAIL NEAR THE CUTICLE

- ✦ File off excess nail so it does not catch and reinjure.
- ✦ Apply topical antibiotic to prevent infection.
- ✦ If the break is small and there is no infection, it will heal on its own, but it will take several months for the nail to grow out.
- ✦ If the break extends far across the nail, apply a bandage and instruct the client to monitor it and seek advice from a doctor if pain increases.

A CUT ON THE BOTTOM OF THE FOOT

- ✦ If a puncture wound, refer to a doctor.
- ✦ If a superficial cut, wash area with soap and water or hydrogen peroxide and dress with a topical antibiotic and bandage.
- ✦ If redness or swelling occurs, refer to a doctor.

AN ALLERGIC REACTION TO A PRODUCT

- ✦ Discontinue application immediately.
- ✦ Wash area with water and oil (mineral oil or olive oil).
- ✦ Apply cortisone cream (over-the-counter strength).
- ✦ Refer the client to a dermatologist to get tested, because they may have cross reactions to other things that are potentially more serious.

OVER-FILING A NAIL

- ✦ If painful or raw, apply topical antibiotic and bandage.
- ✦ Instruct client that the area will harden quickly and should not be a problem.

A NAIL THAT HAS BEEN RIPPED OFF

- ✦ Wash with soap and water or hydrogen peroxide.
- ✦ Dress with a topical antibiotic and bandage.
- ✦ Refer them immediately to a doctor.

SPLINTERS FROM WOODEN FILES

- ✦ If it can not easily be removed, refer to a doctor.
- ✦ Splinters can easily cause infections and it is best to have a doctor remove and treat.

The **more serious:**

HEART ATTACK

- ✦ Symptoms include persistent chest pain lasting more than three minutes, pain in either arm, sweating, dizziness, and trouble breathing.
- ✦ Have the person stop any activity and help them get into a comfortable resting position.
- ✦ Loosen any restrictive clothing.
- ✦ Monitor breathing and pulse, and administer CPR if the person loses consciousness and breathing and pulse stop.
- ✦ Call 911.

FAINT

- ✦ Position the person on back.
- ✦ Elevate legs eight to 12 inches unless you suspect head, neck, or back injuries, or possible broken bones.
- ✦ Call 911.

BAD FALLS

- ✦ Control any bleeding.
- ✦ Help the fallen person into a comfortable prone position.
- ✦ Reassure the person and keep them from becoming chilled or overheated.
- ✦ Keep any dislocated joints, broken bone ends, and adjacent joints from moving.
- ✦ Call 911.

DEEP CUTS AND ABRASIONS

- ✦ If possible, flush wound with cool, running water.
- ✦ Apply direct pressure and if possible, elevate limb above heart.
- ✦ Apply sterile bandage.
- ✦ If bleeding does not stop, call 911.

LABOR

- ✦ Call 911 and follow emergency operator's instructions.
- ✦ Provide privacy for expectant mother and sanitary area where she can lay flat on her back.
- ✦ Don't hold the mother's legs closed.
- ✦ Allow the baby to come out on its own.
- ✦ Don't attempt to cut the umbilical cord.
- ✦ Place baby and after-birth on mother's chest.
- ✦ Have mother remove any objects from baby's mouth, nose, and eyes.

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Every salon should have a first aid kit on hand, and every employee should know exactly where it is. Personalize your first aid kit by stocking it with over-the-counter medications that are used regularly, like pain relievers, cold tablets, and diarrhea medication, and also include an emergency supply of any prescription medication a coworker is known to need to ensure well-being, for example heart medication, insulin, etc.

Your First Aid Kit Should Include:



+ FIRST AID KIT

- Small flashlight (with extra batteries and bulb)
- Scissors and tweezers
- Emergency blanket
- Triangular bandages
- Antiseptic towelettes (hand cleaner)
- Topical antibiotic like Neosporin
- Adhesive strips (assorted sizes) and adhesive tape
- Gauze pads and roller bandage (assorted sizes)
- Disposable gloves
- Cold pack and plastic bags
- Rescue breathing face shield or mask
- A list of emergency phone numbers
- Copy of the American Red Cross First Aid Book

Here are some important numbers you can fill out and then tape to the inside of your first aid kit:



+ EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Police Department _____

Fire Department _____

Hospital _____

Poison Control Center _____

Animal Control _____

If you would like to find out how to register for CPR, first aid, and other health and safety classes, visit www.redcross.org to find your local Red Cross chapter and inquire about the services they provide.



Visit www.nailsmag.com/resources/handouts.aspx for printable copies of these injuries and first aid kit handouts.