

The effects of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic are creating a Corona-crisis for the beauty salon and spa industry. In an effort to reduce the transmission of COVID-19, many non-essential businesses have been ordered to close or have employees work from home. When you're providing professional beauty services, that just isn't possible, especially if you're also adhering to the practice of self-isolation and social distancing. However, these drastic measures are deemed necessary to confront the outbreak head-on and slow its viral spread.

While the situation may look bleak right now and may be making life very difficult, this will pass, and things will eventually return back to "normal." The good news is you're not losing business to the beauty salon or spa down the street as they too are all closed. Your clients are also unlikely to be doing their own nails, facials, and massages, so they'll be eager to get back into your capable hands as soon as this is all over. In the meantime, what can you be doing while you're waiting to get back to work?

The coronavirus outbreak has, for many people, meant a crash course on the subject of germs, their transmission, and how to deal with an outbreak. However, the practice of infection prevention is not new to salons and spas, given that regulations, guidelines, and best practices have been in place for decades to protect professional beauty workers and their clients. This may be a good opportunity to refresh your knowledge and get a good understanding of the impact germs can have on your business and client interactions.

Protocols in place

If this pandemic has taught us anything, it's the importance of being prepared and having processes in place to address the spread of germs before they lead to an outbreak. What is the state of your spa's readiness and to what degree are your employees and colleagues following the same practices and protocols? There's little benefit to having one clean and disinfected area next to another where germs are allowed free reign—infection will spread wherever it can. Your protocols should address questions like:

- What is your policy regarding clients who are sick and present with flu-like symptoms or have nail fungal infections?
- What cleaning and disinfection practices take place between each client service or treatment?
- What guidelines regulate your business or treatments by the government?
- How did you select the cleaners and disinfectants you're using in your beauty salon or spa? Are you and your staff/colleagues fully aware of the use instructions and precautionary statements listed on the labels or safety data sheets (SDS)?
- Are your staffs following the protocol each time when a customer arrive or leave?
- Do you have protocols posted as a visual reminder of what steps need to be taken to effectively clean and disinfect tools, equipment, and surfaces?

You too can go through your own process of what needs to be done before, during and after every service and treatment to ensure the safety of your clients, colleagues, and most importantly, you.



DO A DEEP CLEAN and refresh the look

Maybe a fresh coat of paint, replacement of some old furniture, or investment in new equipment is just what this downtime calls for. Take a look at your cleaning supply make an inventory of the products you are using. Are they the right match for your disinfection protocols? Do they kill the germs relevant to your beauty salon or spa? Are they safe for everyday use or do they come with some potentially harsh side effects after prolonged exposure (like bleach)?. As you walk through your treatment areas, there will be lots of areas that stand out—now is the time to get to them done.

COMMUNICATE WITH CLIENTS

No doubt you've received any number of COVID-19 updates from companies you regularly deal with keeping you apprised of the latest developments. During this time, you should also be communicating with your own clients through email and social medias channels to share what's going on. Let them know what steps you're taking to maintain a germ-free facility and the protocols you're putting in practice to ensure everyone's future safety. Take a look at your website—is there a section there that addresses your business's position when it comes to infection prevention? Social distancing shouldn't extend to digital silence, so now is the time to get out there and communicate with your clients—they will listen.

UPDATE YOUR MARKETING MATERIALS

If you're more of a traditional promoter or marketer, your print pieces, in-store posters, and point of purchase displays can also be updated to include some reassuring language outlining the steps you're taking to maintain a germ-free facility. Use those pieces as an opportunity to engage with your clients and share your advanced awareness and knowledge of infection prevention. Easily accessible disinfecting wipes and tent cards on workstations are also a good way of letting your clients know you're taking disinfecting steps between each service. Combined with client engagement and education, this could just be what distinguishes your spa from others. And while we may not see another pandemic the likes of COVID-19 for some time, smaller outbreaks are likely to be the new norm, so it's good to be proactive.

It was once said that "necessity is the mother of all invention," and that has never been more relevant than in these difficult times. Beauty salons and spas are certainly taking a beating from the virus, but the perseverance and ingenuity of the professional beauty industry is fighting back with initiatives and preparation for a return to normal cy-for instance, offering discounted and packages to maintain cash flow.

The coronavirus outbreak was a wake-up call for many that the germs that can lead to a pandemic or a skin infection cannot be taken for granted. With knowledge, planning, and determination, you can make a difference by keeping you, your clients, and your spa safe when that "Open for **Business**" sign goes back on the door and welcome your client!





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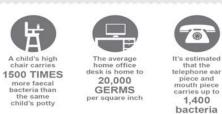
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