



衛生署
Department of Health

Advisory Note on the Provision of Cosmetic Procedures (for beauty service providers)

Objective

This advisory note aims to provide advice to beauty service providers on the “dos and don’ts” when offering cosmetic procedures to clients.

Background

Following the adverse incident in October 2012 resulting from invasive medical procedures provided by a beauty service company, the Government established the Working Group on Differentiation between Medical Procedures and Beauty Services (Working Group) under the Steering Committee on Review of Regulation of Private Healthcare Facilities (Steering Committee) to consider differentiating medical treatments from ordinary beauty services and to make recommendations on the regulatory approach.

The Working Group has drawn up a list of recommendations which have subsequently been endorsed by the Steering Committee. This advisory note is prepared based on these recommendations and the general infection control principles.

Dos and Don’ts

Dos

Certain cosmetic procedures, especially those involving skin penetration*, carry health risks and should be performed with extra caution.

*Refers to procedures which involve the operator piercing the skin of the client with a sharp instrument, causing a breach in skin integrity. If managed inappropriately, these procedures have the potential to cause infections which may affect both the operator and the client.

✓ **Observe strict infection control measures when performing skin penetration procedures**

All procedures involving skin penetration (e.g. lancing of the skin to remove pimples, body piercing, and tattooing etc.) pose a risk of infections,



including blood-borne infections. Strict infection control measures must be adopted to safeguard your clients from infections. More details can be found in the “Recommended Guidelines on Infection Control for Skin Penetration Practice” available at the website of the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health -

<http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/wapdf/11476/1.html>.

✓ **Single use devices should be used as far as possible**

Disposable, pre-packed, pre-sterilized equipment intended for single use should be used for skin penetration procedures whenever possible.

✓ **Make sure you have received appropriate training before you perform skin penetration procedures such as tattooing and body piercing**

Tattooing and body piercing are procedures which involve skin puncture with injection of pigment or insertion of objects into the skin. The risks of such procedures are relatively higher when performed in close proximity to organs or body parts which are prone to severe complications. For example, ocular damage may occur due to accidental injection of the eye during micro-pigmentation of the eye line, severe bleeding may result from tongue piercing.

Special care should be exercised when these procedures are performed on body parts with higher risk of complications.

✓ **Ensure that your client is made aware of the risks involved in the cosmetic procedure you are offering and is allowed to make informed decisions before undergoing the procedure.**

✓ **If you refer your client to a registered medical practitioner to undergo a cosmetic procedure, provide your client with the name of the doctor who is going to perform the procedure in writing.**



Don'ts

Some cosmetic procedures are associated with high risk of complications. Only registered medical practitioners/registered dentists are appropriately trained to identify those who are not suitable to receive such procedures, to handle complications, and to provide necessary follow-up management.

*Do not perform the procedures set out below if you are **NOT** a registered medical practitioner.*

You should advise your client to consult a registered medical practitioner. Only registered medical practitioners are qualified to conduct a medical assessment of your client's suitability for the procedure and handle complications that may arise during and after the procedure.

Depending on the facts and evidence of each case, failure to follow this advice may render yourself liable for offences under the Medical Registration Ordinance (Cap. 161).

× **Cosmetic procedures that involve injections**

Procedures that involve injection of substances into the body may cause complications such as infection, bleeding, haematoma formation, bruising, and scarring. Examples of these procedures include injection of dermal fillers, botulinum toxin A, skin whitening agents and platelet rich plasma, mesotherapy and injection lipolysis. Needle-free injections of cosmetic substances via the use of jet injectors are also included.

× **Cosmetic procedures that involve mechanical/chemical exfoliation of the skin below the epidermis**

The complications associated with these procedures may include hyperpigmentation, infection and scarring.



× **Hyperbaric oxygen therapy**

The procedure is a form of treatment for medical conditions such as decompression sickness or acute carbon monoxide poisoning. It is known to be associated with serious complications including barotrauma and oxygen toxicity. It should not be performed as a form of beauty procedure.

*Do not perform the procedure set out below
if you are **NOT** a registered dentist.*

*Depending on the facts and evidence of each case, failure to follow this advice may
render yourself liable for offences under the
Dentists Registration Ordinance (Cap. 156).*

× **Dental bleaching or teeth whitening**

Dental bleaching is a procedure involving the use of bleaching agents to achieve teeth whitening. Tooth bleaching materials which are based primarily on hydrogen peroxide may cause irritation of mucous membranes and the gastric tract if the product is swallowed accidentally. It may lead to complications, such as tooth dentine hypersensitivity, pulpal pain caused by bleaching on undetected caries and defective dental fillings, especially if performed inappropriately or performed on inappropriate clients, such as those suffering from pre-existing dental conditions.