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PEDICURE SAFETY AWARENESS FOR THE AMERICAN CONSUMER

General tips for the consumer prior to having a pedicure:

1. Do NOT shave or wax your legs for 48 hours prior to any pedicure. Shaving the legs can produce very small nicks in the skin or leave open pores. Waxing will also leave open pores. These can allow bacteria to enter during a foot soak and thus might be a cause of infection.
2. If you have an open wound on your legs or feet, do not have a pedicure. These need medical attention. If you require foot care, see a licensed medical specialist such as a Podiatrist (DPM)

Observations of the salon/spa:

There are observations that you can make when entering a salon/spa to help determine safety for having a pedicure. It is also important to ask the person that does your pedicure some questions. If you are uncomfortable with either your observations or what you hear, you might consider going to another facility.

1. Does the pedicure area including chairs, foot bath and table, as well as the rest of the salon/spa look clean? Does it have adequate ventilation or are there strong chemical smells? If you are not comfortable, then find another spa.
2. Are the Nail Technicians/Pedicurists licensed? Certificates should be prominently displayed for clients to see.*
3. Do the pedicurists have advanced education and qualifications such as ANT (Advanced Nail Technician) MNT (Medical Nail technician) or CMP (Certified Master Pedicurist)? Also are they members of a Professional Association such as the IPA (International Pedicure Association)? Infection control is part of any advanced education and a prominent focus for the IPA. Look to see if certificates are displayed and ask if you don't see any.
4. Does the pedicurist give a brief assessment before starting the pedicure? This includes examining your feet, asking you a few relevant health questions and documenting

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findings before starting a pedicure. Pedicurists should wash their hands with soap and water before touching the clients' hands or feet. It is also recommended that a pedicurist wear gloves for both your own and their protection.

5. Ask how foot tub/whirlpool foot baths are cleaned and disinfected. What type of products are they using and how often are the tubs cleaned and/or disinfected. An EPA registered disinfectant with a fungus, virus and bacteria claim should be used. **
6. Ask if metal implements are cleaned and either disinfected or sterilized between clients.
7. Ask if tools and supplies that cannot be disinfected by immersion, e.g. wooden files, orangewood sticks, nail buffers, gloves etc. are disposed of after every client.

* Connecticut does not require licensing for pedicures.

** Each state has its own regulations for whirlpool tub cleaning. The foot tub can be a major source for spreading contagious conditions, so it is imperative that proper cleaning guidelines are followed. Foot baths must be cleaned and disinfected between each client as well as at the end of the day.

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