

## HOW CAN I IMPROVE THE AIR IN MY SALON?

- Open windows and doors to let fresh air circulate in the room
- Place fans next to open doors and windows to pull clean air inside and push chemical fumes outside
- Put lids on trash cans
- Close bottles and containers of nail products when you are not using them
- Put cotton balls and Q-tips in a sealed bag before throwing it away
- Eat or drink in a break room or outside, away from your work station
- If you have a nail station ventilation system, make sure there is a filter and don't cover it with towels or cloth



## WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?

- Buy nail products that are “3-Free” - that do not contain toluene, formaldehyde, and DBP
- Buy acrylic liquids that do not have MMA
- Tell your customers about 3-free nail products and why your salon uses them
- Tell your supplier to sell 3-free products, nitrile gloves, and N95 masks
- Share this information with your salon owner, workers, and supply stores

## WHAT CAN I WEAR TO PROTECT MYSELF?

- Wear nitrile gloves instead of latex or vinyl gloves
- Wear a NIOSH-approved N95 mask instead of a surgical mask when doing acrylic nails
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and gloves to cover your arms and hands and prevent acrylic dust from touching the skin



You can buy **Nitrile gloves** and **N95 masks** at stores such as **Home Depot** or **Costco**

For more information, contact the California Nail Salon Collaborative



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# Understanding the **TOXIC TRIO**

Protecting  
yourself at  
work...

A Guide  
for the  
Nail Salon  
Workforce

## WHAT ARE NAIL PRODUCTS MADE WITH?

Nail salon workers use a variety of products every day. Like most cosmetics, nail products are made of many different chemicals. Some of the chemicals can cause many serious health problems with regular use. Three chemicals of concern include toluene, formaldehyde, and dibutyl phthalate, also called the "Toxic Trio".

## WHAT IF I DON'T EXPERIENCE ANY HEALTH PROBLEMS?

Some chemicals in nail products can cause health problems, like cancer or asthma, that you do not feel right away. The health problems do not show up until many years or months after you use the products. Chemicals in nail products can damage your health when you breathe or inhale them, or when they touch your skin.

# The TOXIC TRIO



### **TOLUENE** *can cause*

- Dry or cracked skin
- Irritated, burning, and itchy eyes, nose, and throat
- Headaches and dizziness
- Harm to a developing fetus or pregnant women workers and is suspected to cause miscarriage
- Effects on the brain (cannot concentrate, remember, or recognize words)

### **FORMALDEHYDE** *can cause*

- Watery and burning eyes
- Breathing problems (such as asthma, coughing, and wheezing)
- Cancer
- Allergic skin rash

### **DIBUTYL PHTHALATE (DBP)** *can cause*

- Reproductive birth defects in boys

*Nail products can contain many other chemicals that cause the same serious health problems. It is important to know what chemicals are in the products you use. Read ingredient labels and get Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for all nail salon products.*

### **METHYL METHACRYLATE (MMA)**

Methyl Methacrylate (MMA) is another chemical of concern. It is in many acrylic nail products. Dust from acrylic nails can get on your skin, face, eye lids, tip of nose, and fingers. The Board of Barbering and Cosmetology prohibits the use of MMA in nail salons in California.

- Red, itchy, and swollen skin with tiny blisters
- Scratchy throat, runny nose, and cough
- Headache, dizziness, and drowsiness
- Difficulty concentrating or paying attention
- Numbness and muscle weakness

