

For Clients: How to Care For Your Artificial Nails

ATTENTION NAIL TECHNICIANS:

Client handouts are a great way to educate your client and keep her coming back for your skill and expertise. Feel free to make copies of this page to give clients. Attach your business card here before copying.

- **Wearing artificial extensions involves a tradeoff:** In exchange for having consistently beautiful nails, you must visit your nail technician regularly and you must use greater care to protect your nails than you did before you had them applied. Plan to see your nail technician about every two weeks, but your nail technician will determine a schedule appropriate for you.

- **Do not do your nail technician's job for her.** If you break a nail or if a nail begins to lift, schedule a repair appointment; don't fix the nails yourself. Gluing down a loose nail can cause moisture to become trapped between the nail and the extension and could possibly cause an infection. Do not bandage a broken nail either. Bandages can also trap moisture.

- **Treat your nails like jewels, not tools.** Wear gloves when you do any kind of housework or gardening, use a soda can opener on pop tops, and

dial the phone with the eraser end of a pencil.

- **If you are wearing polish or a French manicure, apply a top coat every other day to prevent chipping and yellowing.** If you are out in the sun frequently, you may need to apply top coat every day. Your nail technician can recommend a top coat with UV inhibitors made especially to prevent yellowing.

- **Your nail technician will recommend an application (whether it be acrylic, gel, or a wrap) and a nail length that best suits your hands and your lifestyle.** For example, if you are especially hard on your nails because you work on the computer or do heavy work, shorter nails may be best for you.

- **Keep your cuticles soft by applying cuticle cream, cuticle oil, or a thick lotion once a day.** Try this hand-softening trick:

Slather your hands with lotion before you put rubber gloves on to wash dishes. The heat of the dishwasher will help skin absorb the lotion, and when the dishes are done your hands will be soft.

- **Reschedule your appointment if you are ill.** If you have a contagious skin or nail condition, wait until it clears before visiting the salon again. Make an appointment with your dermatologist if these conditions persist.

- **Very few clients will discover that they are allergic to an ingredient in some nail products.** An allergic reaction is characterized by redness, itching, swelling, or irritation around the nail or around the eyes and mouth. If you develop any of these symptoms, call your nail technician. She will help you determine what ingredients you're having a reaction to and will take steps to help you avoid them. If necessary, she can probably refer you to a dermatologist. Do not ignore a condition that develops around the nail.

- **If for some reason you decide that you no longer want to wear artificial nails, do not take them off yourself!** Although it may seem the simplest way to do it, pulling the nails off can damage your natural nail and make regrowth a long and painful process. Artificial nails can be safely removed if done correctly by your nail technician. ■