Electrolysis, piercing, tattooing and micro-pigmentation

General ventilation

Access and premises

✔ Provide good washing facilities.
Caution: never eat or drink in the work area.

Equipment

✔ Keep the workplace well ventilated, with a through draught.
✔ Use sterile single-use instruments wherever possible.
✔ Sterilise all reusable equipment that can be contaminated with blood, etc. This includes semi-permanent tattooing equipment. Ultraviolet (UV) light boxes and glass bead sterilisers are not good enough.
✔ Either negotiate access to a steriliser in your local hospital or clinic, or use a steam steriliser.
✔ Work surfaces (e.g., floors, tables, couches) must be smooth and impervious to aid cleaning.
✔ Blood contamination means that swabs, gloves, etc. are clinical waste. Put these in a clinical waste container. You need a licensed waste contractor.
Caution: Never decant product into an unlabelled container. Never re-use a container. Dispose of it safely or return it to your supplier.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

✔ Follow the instructions on product labels.
✔ Ask your supplier to help you get the right PPE.
✔ Provide protective gloves - single-use gloves are acceptable. If you must use latex gloves, use only ‘low-protein, powder-free’ gloves.
✔ Throw away single-use gloves every time they are taken off, and wash hands.
✔ Provide a disposable plastic apron and splash-proof eye protection.
✔ Cover all cuts and any broken skin.
✔ Skin creams are important for skin condition. They help in washing contamination from the skin. After-work creams help to replace skin oils.
Caution: ‘barrier creams’ do not make a full barrier.
Procedures
✓ Check that containers are easy to pour from, don’t dribble, and don’t trap liquid in a rim.
✓ If possible, buy products in a ready-for-use solution.
✓ Can you get solid chemicals in tablet form, or in a wide-necked container such that it is easy to scoop out granules?
✓ Store products securely in a cool, dry, dark place, capable of keeping in spills. Don’t store far more than you need.
✓ Read the instructions on the label carefully - follow the instructions for use.
✓ Keep products off your skin - wash off any splashes immediately.
✓ Make up only as much solution as you will need for immediate use.
✓ Put the cap back on the container immediately.
✓ Write down your procedures for dealing with clinical waste.

Special care
✓ Contact with many products can lead to dermatitis. Some can also damage the eyes.
✓ Check that tattoo and micro-pigmentation inks are sterile - see the data sheet.
✓ Try to avoid chloroethane (ethyl chloride) as a skin anaesthetic. This chemical may cause cancer.
✓ Never add any other chemical to concentrates that contain bleach (sodium hypochlorite solution). This can cause a dangerous gas (chlorine) to be given off.

Maintenance, examination and testing
✓ Follow instructions in maintenance manuals - keep equipment in effective and efficient working order.
✓ Steam sterilisers require regular examinations and tests. Seek advice from your insurance provider.
✓ Keep records of these tests.

Health monitoring
✓ Have workers had their Hepatitis B jabs?
✓ Ask your workers to check their skin for dryness or soreness every month. If these effects appear, check the proper use of skin creams and PPE.
✓ Check if any information about the product says ‘may cause sensitisation’ or ‘can cause allergic reactions’. If so, seek advice from the product representative, or a consultant - see Further information.

Cleaning and housekeeping
✓ Keep the work area clean.
✓ Wash out mixing equipment after use. Dispose of this waste liquid safely.
✓ Write down your sterilisation procedures and make sure these are followed.
✓ Sterilise reusable equipment as soon as possible after use.
✓ Clean out ultrasonicators at the end of every day.
✓ Disinfect shower heads once a week.
✓ Clean up spills promptly - practise how to do this.
Service and retail

SR12

General ventilation

Published by the Health and Safety Executive

08/11

This document contains notes on good practice which are not compulsory but which you may find helpful in considering what you need to do.

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