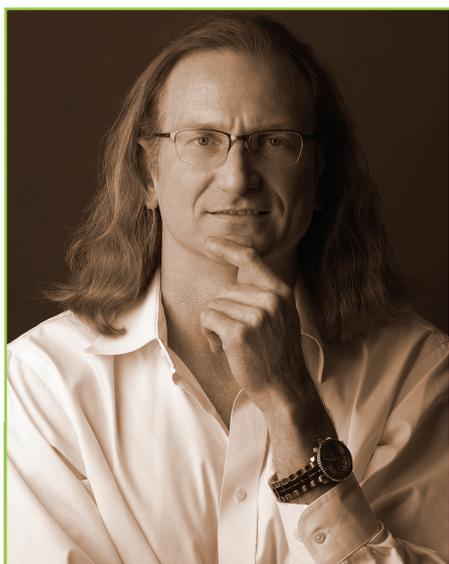


THE SCI-FILES



DOUG SCHOON

Doug Schoon is an internationally recognised scientist, author and educator with over 30 years' experience in the cosmetic, beauty and personal care industry. He is a leading industry authority known for his technical and regulatory work and is co-chair of the *Nail Manufacturers Council (NMC)*.

Doug was CND™'s chief scientist and head of the R&D laboratory, QA, and field testing/evaluation departments for almost 20 years and has authored several books, video and audio training programmes, as well as magazine articles about salon products, safety, and practices for salon professionals.

In 1986, Schoon founded *Chemical Awareness Training Service (CATS)* – the beauty industry's first safety training company. This was followed by his book, *Nail Structure & Product Chemistry*, 1st and 2nd editions, which have become essential reading for nail professionals, with a new edition out soon. He runs *Face-to-Face with Doug Schoon*, an internet learning series that focuses on nails, nail products and services, and has taken this format to paper with the release of two books.

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Watch Doug's internet series on nails, nail products and services at www.faceofacewithdougshoon.com

Globally renowned scientist and nail expert, **DOUG SCHOON**, explores the ideas and concerns surrounding nails, techniques and products

NAIL POLISH: IS THERE AN INFECTION RISK BETWEEN CLIENTS?

I'm often asked about the risks of transmitting infections via a nail polish brush when it is shared between two or more clients. To answer this question, it must be recognised that all professional salon nail polishes are designed for application to healthy, normal, natural nails and artificial nails.

Nail polishes are not intended for direct application over visibly infected nail plates and it is considered a misuse of such products to apply them as a 'cover up' over an active nail infection.

But what about everybody else? If applied to healthy nails, is nail polish a significant risk for transmitting a nail infection? The answer is no!

The Nail Manufacturers Council on Safety (NMC) has conducted a number of studies that conclusively demonstrate that nail polish does not harbour infectious bacteria or fungi when properly used. I was personally involved in these studies, along with several other notable nail industry scientists, so I am convinced of their validity.

Disease-causing organisms (pathogens) cannot live or grow inside nail polish, so they are highly unlikely to cause infections. Why? There are three main reasons:

1. Nail polish contains no water. All pathogens must have water to survive.
2. Nail polish contains no nutrients or food for pathogens, which is required for growth and reproduction.
3. The organic solvents used in nail polish dissolve pathogens and rapidly destroy them.

The studies conducted by the NMC confirm the long-held belief that professional nail polish formulations do not harbour pathogens and they aggressively killed common types of salon-acquired pathogens. One aspect of the study was to intentionally add pathogens into nail polish to see if they could survive.

Another part of the study involved gathering partially used containers of nail polishes randomly collected from many different nail salons located in San Diego, Los Angeles and Portland. These samples were submitted to an independent laboratory for testing. The results showed that no pathogens were found in any of the nail polishes.

These studies demonstrated that nail polish can be safely shared between salon clients. Even so, this may not be true when nail plates are visibly infected. Visible infections contain tremendous amounts of bacteria or fungi; thousands of times more than would ever be found on a natural nail plate with a healthy appearance. To be on the safe side, any use of nail polish on visibly infected nail plates should also be avoided. In other words, if you accidentally brush over a visible infection, my own recommendation is the same as that of the NMC; out of an abundance of caution and keeping the client's protection in mind, the nail polish bottle should be properly discarded and not given to the client. Rest assured, when used according to directions and all warning heeded, nail polish is not only safe to use, but there are now studies to demonstrate that it does not spread nail infections. **S**

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