

## Waxing, Sugaring & Threading

Waxing, sugaring and threading are temporary forms of hair removal (i.e., epilation). Waxing typically involves the application of warm wax or sugar paste to a client's skin. Single-use strips may be used to aid in the removal of soft wax, while hard wax is stripped directly from skin once dry. Sugaring involves the application of a sugar-based paste to the skin. The hardened paste is flicked off in the direction of hair growth, removing the hair and root along with the paste. Threading involves the removal of one or more hairs via the use of a loop of thread. The thread is rapidly moved across a client's skin to trap and remove unwanted hair.

### Infection Risks

Waxing, sugaring and threading involve a risk of infection and other unwanted side effects, such as infection of the hair follicle (folliculitis), irritant or contact dermatitis and skin irritation. Infections can be bacterial, fungal or viral. The risk of infection is increased if:

- Single-use items such as wax applicators, waxing strips, sugaring paste, thread or roll-on wax cartridges are re-used
- The environment is contaminated (i.e., unclean)
- The client or personal service worker touches the treatment area with unclean hands

The temperature of the heated wax is NOT hot enough to kill bacteria or viruses. Additionally, if the temperature of the heated wax is too high it may result in burns to a client's skin.

### Additional Considerations

#### Equipment:

- Single-use, disposable applicators (e.g., spatulas, wooden sticks) are to be used if wax will be dispensed from a wax warming or melting pot.
- A new single-use applicator is to be used for each wax application for every client (including for each wax application on the same client) and discarded after use.
- Roll-on wax cartridges are to be treated as single-use if these are used to apply wax directly to skin. The operator can dispose of the device or offer it to the client for personal use at home. The device is not to be brought back to the premises for future appointments.
- Roll-on wax cartridges may only be reused if these are used to dispense wax onto single-use waxing strips or applicators (i.e., there is no direct contact with skin).
- If threading is performed, thread is not to be placed in the mouth of the operator, i.e. thread is not to come into contact with saliva, which could expose clients to additional infection control risks.
- Fresh paper liner(s) or clean linen on waxing tables/beds are to be provided for each client. Used linens are to be laundered before reuse.

- Lotions, oils and skin antiseptic are to be dispensed such that the remaining product is protected from contamination (e.g., using pump bottles to dispense bulk-supplied product).
- All reusable equipment/instruments/items are to be reprocessed after use.
- Items that are not able to be reprocessed are to be discarded after use (e.g., roller head wax applicators, lancets, needles, eyebrow threading thread)

### Client Safety:

- Operators are to examine the integrity/condition of the client’s skin to ensure that the skin is healthy and intact. Operators are to refuse service(s) if skin is broken, infected or irritated.
- Operators are to inform clients about the risks of waxing when taking anti-acne medication, as this may increase risk of infection by damaging the skin and potentially removing the epidermis (top layer of the skin).
- Operators are to perform hand hygiene before and after each waxing procedure, in between breaks in service, and before putting on or after removing gloves.
- Operators are to clean and disinfect a client’s skin with a skin antiseptic prior to waxing.

### Reprocessing Classification

<b>Semi-critical</b> <i>High Level Disinfection</i>	<b>Non-critical</b> <i>Intermediate Level Disinfection</i>	<b>Non-critical</b> <i>Low-Level Disinfection</i>	<b>Various</b> <i>Single-Use/Disposable</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tweezers used to expose ingrown hairs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tweezers used to remove hair from the hair follicle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tables, chairs, beds</li> <li>• Scissors used to cut single-use wax strips or eyebrow-threading threads</li> <li>• Magnifying glasses</li> <li>• Service trays</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single-use personal protective equipment (gloves)</li> <li>• Waxing applicator sticks</li> <li>• Roller head (roll-on) wax applicators</li> <li>• Waxing strips</li> <li>• Eyebrow-threading threads</li> <li>• Lancets and needles used to remove ingrown hairs*</li> <li>• Paper used to cover the waxing bed/table</li> <li>• Unused, decanted wax/sugaring product</li> <li>• Applicators used to apply facial powder prior to threading</li> <li>• Cotton balls</li> <li>• Paper undergarments</li> <li>• Unused, dispensed lotion or aftercare products</li> </ul>

\*These items are to be sterile prior to use

### Sources

1. Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). [Guide to infection prevention and control in personal service settings](#). 3rd ed. Toronto, ON: Queen’s Printer for Ontario; 2018.
2. Barn P. Waxing promising practices fact sheet [Internet]. Vancouver, BC: National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health; 2010 [cited 2018 May 18]. Available from: [http://www.ncceh.ca/sites/default/files/Waxing\\_Fact\\_Sheet\\_Sept\\_2010.pdf](http://www.ncceh.ca/sites/default/files/Waxing_Fact_Sheet_Sept_2010.pdf)

*This fact sheet is based on PSS best practice recommendations, current reprocessing standards and legislation. It is not an inclusive list of all requirements. Operators are responsible to ensure that all services are offered according to local requirements, best practices and legislation.*