

HAIRDRESSING 2

DERMATITIS

This is a debilitating and unsightly condition of the skin. At best it is irritating or painful. At worst, it can be seriously disabling and could end someone's employment prospects.

Dermatitis is an occupational health risk that is particularly associated with the hairdressing profession.

THE LAW REQUIRES YOU TO PROTECT AGAINST THIS RISK

What you must do

1. Recognise the early symptoms

- Early signs are redness, flaking, itching and cracking of the skin

2. Recognise the main causes

- Shampoo is an irritant. It can cause contact dermatitis and can also make you more susceptible to dermatitis from the other products because it removes the protective oils from the skin.
- Other preparations, e.g. perming solution and tints can cause allergic dermatitis.

3. Take adequate precautions

You must adequately control risks associated with Dermatitis. Unless you can devise an equally effective control measure, the precautions should be:

- Wear gloves routinely *during shampooing* and when mixing and applying preparations, AND
- Use barrier creams and moisturisers regularly

4. Instruct and supervise staff

- Make sure they know the early signs of dermatitis
- Make sure they know the correct precautions
- Supervise staff to ensure that they are following the correct procedures and are using the necessary precautions when they should be.

It is essential that medical advice is sought as soon as symptoms are noticed.