



## Don't Touch Your Eyes!

### & Avoid Spreading Colds This Season

by Brenda Fishbaugh

**A**long with the tanning season comes the cold and flu season. Nothing is worse than your staff – or your tanners – being out sick when it's time to get everyone tan! There are many things a tanning salon owner can do to reduce the number of colds and flu viruses that get passed around at the salon.

First and foremost, a flu vaccination for each member of your staff will help reduce sickness in your salon. "There's no question that the flu vaccine is the single best way to avoid catching or passing the virus," said Dr. Jane Siegel, an infectious disease specialist at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. Siegel feels that washing your hands is the second best way you can cut down infections. "Rub your hands together for the length of time it takes to sing the 'Happy Birthday' song twice," she suggests.

Doctors also are still recommending anti-microbial gel for washing hands, despite recent reports of "super bugs" that have now become resistant to the antibacterial hand and dish soaps.

Dr. Mark Kimpel, an ophthalmologist and research doctor with Indiana University Medical School, states, "Most people are aware that the common


cold, which is caused by the rhinovirus, can be spread through contact with contaminated surfaces. While it is certainly true that the cold virus can spread from the hands to the mouth or nose, it can also spread from the hand to the eye. That redness and puffiness you get sometimes with a cold? It is caused by the cold virus infecting the *conjunctiva*, the pink lining of the eye. Once the virus gets into the eye, it can easily spread to the nose and throat.

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Furthermore, in four studies done on healthy volunteers (*Am J Epidemiol*. 1982 Nov; 116(5):828-33.), investigators found that spraying the contaminated surface with a commercial disinfectant reduced, but did not eliminate the spread of virus (8% of surfaces remained infectious). Dr. Kimpel concludes, "The only way to absolutely eliminate the risk of transmission of the cold virus is to not come in contact with an infected surface, even one that has been 'cleaned.' So consider supplying disposable eye protection

to your clients and using paper towels when cleaning salon surfaces."

Wow! We all think that we should keep our hands away from our mouths, but our EYES also play a key role in transmitting disease. So, make sure your eye protection is stored in a clean place – this **does not** mean laid out on a towel on your reception counter! A sneeze will send germs flying up to eight feet, so your entire reception counter can be infected with just one AHHH-CHOO!

Keep your salon super-clean, keep your eye protection super-clean and enjoy a super-healthy tanning season! 



#### About the Author:

Tanning industry veteran Brenda Fishbaugh is president of Eye Pro, Inc., makers of disposable eyewear. She travels extensively training salons on the effects of UV light on vision.