

## tread lightly

You know the rules: Before you fetch your flip-flops, get thee to a salon for a pedicure. With nail bars as ubiquitous as coffee bars now, it's more convenient than ever to get a pedi - but you shouldn't compromise safety for convenience. An unprofessional, unsanitary environment carries health risks that can last a lot longer than your polish. Unsterile tools and overzealous cuticle clipping can lead to painful nail infections that could take months to heal, according to Dr. Peter Vignjevic, a dermatologist in Hamilton. But this doesn't have to be the fate of your feet. By asking the right questions and taking a few precautions, your toes can be healthy and sandal-ready.

- Before you book an appointment, inquire about the salon's sterilizing and disinfecting procedures, says Haley Phippard, owner of Flow Nail Spa in Toronto. "A hospital-grade disinfectant and another sterilizer, such as a dry-heat cabinet or a hot-air sterilizer, should be used after every service," she says. If you don't feel comfortable with what you've seen and heard, walk away.
- During your treatment, make sure that your pedicurist is careful on your cuticles. "The cuticle is there to seal the space between the nail and the skin," says Vignjevic. "Clipping it back can break that seal and allow bacteria to get in, defeating the whole purpose of the cuticle." Since cuticle work is part of nearly every nail service, ask your aesthetician to either skip it or clip very little.
- Bring your own flip-flops. Fungal toe infections are easily transmitted when bare feet are exposed to a wet environment, says Vignjevic. Wearing flip-flops can help reduce the risk.



## quoteworthy

"It's the nature of cosmetic surgery that, as it becomes more popular, it adjusts our standards of beauty and expectations of appearance. Large, bouncy breasts, slender hips and blinding-white, straight teeth used to be the rare departures from typical human looks. But now they're no longer rarities; they're everyday expectations. The process begins with our trying to emulate nature, but then we become greedy and try to improve on nature." - *Beauty Junkies: Inside Our \$15 Billion Obsession With Cosmetic Surgery* (Doubleday, 2006) by Alex Kuczynski.

For a comprehensive guide to cosmetic surgery, turn to page 64.

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The number of Canadians who claim that environmental considerations affect their grocery shopping habits.

For more info on going green, watch for glow's October/November issue.