



We're Open for Business!

by Nicole Kenny, vice president of professional and technical services for Virox Pro Beauty

Ignorance more frequently begets confidence than does knowledge. COVID-19 caught many off guard. There has been panic, uncertainty, and fear. The pandemic has taught the world that humans need to be more thoughtful when it comes to infection prevention and control. As professionals in the post-pandemic era, it is time to educate and instill a sense of comfort and confidence in clients when they walk back in through the spa's doors.

Being confident and talking about infection prevention protocols is one way to provide that confidence. While at home in self-isolation, many individuals have been spring cleaning, organizing, and purging. While the spa is clean, imagine the sense of comfort clients will have if they are told that it has been disinfected, including the spa equipment, tools, surfaces, and more in preparation for their return. Think of opening the spa doors post-pandemic like a grand opening, like hosting a party. Spend the time to clean, disinfect, organize, touch up paint scuffs, or, better yet, repaint.

Once ready to open the doors, telling clients that the spa has been disinfected is only the first step. When they walk through the door in the post-pandemic era, they are going to be wary – they are going to judge. What can a skin care professional do to not just tell them, but show them, what has been done? Using visuals such as tent cards, window stickers, posting protocols, and having a canister of disinfectant wipes in clear view is another way to provide confidence.

When clients walk in the door, consider having a hand sanitizer station. Certainly, the aesthetic of a hand sanitizer station may not have been something that fit with the original spa vision of beauty and tranquility, but caution over aesthetic looks is more important at this time.

Setting the stage that everyone who walks in the door sanitizes their hands is a great way to illustrate the heightened level of infection prevention the spa has implemented and shows how much the client's health is cared for. Most importantly, before starting a treatment, be sure to cleanse hands or use hand sanitizer in front of the client.

When starting their treatment, spend time catching up and re-establishing the rapport prior to the pandemic,

but also use this time to educate them. Talk to clients about the requirements the spa must follow through the cosmetology board. Most importantly, tell them where the spa is exceeding in them! Meeting requirements shows that the spa and staff know what needs to be done, but exceeding them shows how the spa takes the client's health seriously on a personal level.

For example, talk to them about the disinfectants used for cleaning surfaces and equipment, such as skin care treatment machines. Is the spa using a product bought at the local grocery store, or can the client be told that the spa uses a hospital-grade disinfectant? Talk to them about contact time, which is the length of time that a disinfectant needs to stay wet on a surface to work properly, and the fact that the spa has chosen a product with a short contact time, so that the spa is confident any lingering microbes are eradicated.

When it comes to the tools that require soaking, such as tweezers, comedones extractors, and more, exceeding the level of disinfection needed by the cosmetology board is another way of differentiating the spa from other competitors. Consider changing the process to using an FDA-registered high-level disinfectant. Most state cosmetology guidelines only require the use of an intermediate-level disinfectant for soaking tools and implements, but a high-level disinfectant can offer an additional layer of protection. Better yet, these solutions are designed to be re-used over several days or weeks, meaning the spa does not need to dispose the product daily. Not only does this allow the spa the ability to tell clients they are exceeding the requirements for disinfection, but now they can also tell them how the spa has improved their environmental stewardship, by not disposing as much disinfectant back into the environment.

In the post-pandemic era, people are going to question the things they had always taken for granted. They now know what bacteria, viruses, and other microbes are, where they can be found, and how they cause disease. But, perhaps, most impactful is that the public will have gained a sense of responsibility to take reasonable action to prevent transmission. This is the skin care professional's moment to shine. This is the moment to show how responsible the spa and the staff are.