**Ringworm, a guide for barbers and salons**

**Ringworm is a fungal infection that is easily transmitted in hair dressing premises if some basic procedures are not followed. Read and follow the guidance below to protect your customers and your business.**

Ringworm, a fungal infection that affects the skin, scalp, and nails, can spread easily in environments like barber shops or salons if proper hygiene measures are not taken. Follow these steps to ensure a safe and hygienic experience for your customers:

1. Hygiene and Cleanliness

* Sanitize Tools: Disinfect combs, scissors, clippers, razors, and any other tools after each use. Use a hospital-grade disinfectant or autoclave sterilizer.
* Use Disposable Items: Opt for single-use items like razor blades, neck strips, and towels whenever practical.
* Clean Capes and Linens: Wash capes, towels, and other reusable items in hot water with detergent after each use.
* Regular Cleaning: Deep clean all workstations, chairs, and surfaces at least once daily.

2. Customer Protection

* Examine Scalps and Skin: Before starting any service, visually check for signs of ringworm or other infections (red, scaly patches or hair loss). If noticed, politely decline the service and recommend medical consultation.
* Protective Barriers: Use neck strips or clean towels around the neck to prevent direct contact between the customer's skin and the cape.

3. Barber Hygiene

* Handwashing: Wash hands with soap and water before and after serving each customer. Use hand sanitizer as an additional step.
* Wear Gloves: If there’s a chance of contact with broken skin or infected areas, wear disposable gloves.

4. Education and Training

* Train all staff on proper hygiene practices, ringworm symptoms, and how to maintain a clean workspace.
* Display health and hygiene certifications visibly to assure customers of your commitment to safety.

5. Policy Implementation

* No Service to Infected Individuals: Have a clear policy to avoid serving customers with visible signs of infections. Offer them referrals to dermatologists if necessary.
* Hygiene Monitoring: Assign staff to regularly inspect and monitor hygiene practices in the shop.

6. Regular Maintenance

* Tool Inspection: Check tools regularly for damage or wear, as nicks and cracks can harbour fungus.
* Ventilation: Maintain proper airflow in the shop to reduce humidity, which can promote fungal growth.

By following these guidelines, you create a safer environment for your customers and help prevent the spread of infections like ringworm.

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/ringworm/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/ringworm/) is a useful source of information on how Ringworm can spread, symptoms and preventative measures.

Hygiene standards are enforced by District Environmental Health Teams who follow the Local Authority National Enforcement Code. The Code is given legal effect by Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance under section 18(4) (b) of Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HSWA) and applies to England, Wales and Scotland.

When concerns are raised with regards to hygiene measures within a local business the district Environmental Health Team have responsibility for investigating. They can undertake inspections in these circumstances to ensure premises have an acceptable level of hygiene.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Better Business for All works to boost business productivity and growth by making it easier for businesses to access the regulatory support they need from Local Authorities such as Trading Standards, Environmental Health, Licensing, and others. BBfA also works with regulators to help them better understand the challenges faced by businesses.

I hope this guidance has been useful, further business support information can be found here: [Better Business For All | Hertfordshire Futures](https://www.hertfordshirefutures.co.uk/business/better-business-for-all/)