Salon Injuries & Prevention

Tanning salons thrive on customer experience and reputation. A bodily injury is not the desired customer experience! Word of mouth spreads fast, and a negative customer experience could have a widespread and ongoing impact on the continued success of the salon. By evaluating bodily injury claims at tanning salon, one can easily identify that most of the injuries are preventable, and more likely than not, caused by someone not paying enough attention or not following safe indoor tanning practices.

Common Bodily Injuries at Tanning Salons

Slip, Trip & Falls   Burns   Allergic Reactions   Chemical Burns   Eye Injuries

Lacerations and Abrasions

Slip, Trip & Falls

Slip, Trip and Falls are one of the most common types of preventable accidents at commercial establishments including tanning salons. Customers can experience a bodily injury when they slip on a wet floor surface, trip over something, or as a result of lightheadedness and loss of balance after a tanning session. The health status and age of a customer can also be a factor in a fall, but more often than not, some physical element or hazard is the main cause of the fall.

Falls are common when a customer is entering into or exiting out of a tanning bed or spray booth. It is important to ensure that the floor surfaces in the salon remain clean and clear of foreign objects, water and other types of debris. The floor surfaces around tanning equipment should be slip resistant, which can be achieved by installing non-slip mats in these areas.

Good housekeeping helps reduce the chances of slips, trips, or falls. Posting signs (e.g., "Wet - Slippery Floor"), reporting unusual conditions, and knowing what to do when there is a spill are essential housekeeping tasks for effective fall prevention. A facility self-inspection checklist should be used to record the daily inspection of the tanning salon for liability concerns.

Falls on sidewalks are often the result of the failure of the property owner or other responsible person to maintain the sidewalk in a reasonably safe condition (e.g., in good repair and free of snow, ice, and other debris). Regular sidewalk inspection is an important tool for identifying hazardous conditions that require correction. Sidewalks should be an element included in the facility self-inspection checklist with the goal of identifying construction hazards (e.g. cracks, uneven surfaces, etc.) and temporary hazards (e.g. debris, water/snow/ice, other items that may impede access along the sidewalk).

Burns

Burns are another frequent type of preventable bodily injury experienced at tanning salons. Burns can be the result of overexposure, defective equipment or related to an undisclosed medical condition that would disqualify a customer from indoor tanning. Burns can cause scarring and potentially result in lifetime pain and embarrassment.

Burns occur as a result of:

- **Overexposure** Starting with long exposures (close to the maximum time for the particular tanning bed). Remember burns take 6 to 48 hours to develop, so a customer may not realize that they are burned right away. Failing to follow manufacturer-recommended exposure times on the label for skin type may cause burns.

- **Contact with Tanning Bulb** Acrylic shields should be inspected after each use during the cleaning process to identify cracks and/or exposed lamps. Lamps should conform to manufacturer's recommendations, and replacement lamps should be certified to FDA standards to be equivalent to the original equipment lamp listed on the device label and manual.
- **Chemical Burns** The chemicals commonly used in spray tanning may cause allergic reactions in some individuals. Patch testing should be performed on all persons with known sensitivities to tanning solutions or other related cosmetic ingredients.
- **Medication Photosensitivity** Tanning should not be permitted when a customer is using certain medications or cosmetics that may make the customer more sensitive to UV rays.
- **Inadequately Trained Operators** All persons who assist clients or operate equipment should be trained in the safe operation and maintenance of tanning equipment. These operators should be present when tanning equipment is used. Training should include:
    - Basic medical aspects of the UV radiation as it affects the tanning process
    - How to determine skin types and exposure schedules
    - Procedures for correctly cleaning, sanitizing, and operating the device
    - How to recognize overexposure to radiation or similar injuries
    - Emergency procedures in the case of overexposure or injury.

  Please Note: several states require tanning salon operators to undergo formal training at state-approved facilities. Written records should be maintained of employee qualifications and training.

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