



# Nail Technician 26

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## Practice Questions

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**1. Which process destroys ALL microbial life, including bacterial endospores, making an implement completely free of all microorganisms?**

- A. Sterilization
- B. Antiseptic cleaning
- C. Disinfection
- D. Sanitation

**2. A client sustains a deep cut at the base of her nail during an accident. Six months later, her new nail grows out deformed. Which structure was most likely damaged?**

- A. Nail plate
- B. Nail bed
- C. Matrix
- D. Hyponychium

**3. After a pedicure, a nail technician must disinfect the foot spa basin. According to standard infection-control protocol, which type of disinfectant product is required?**

- A. Isopropyl alcohol applied with a single-use wipe
- B. Any household bleach product at any concentration
- C. An EPA-registered, hospital-grade disinfectant used per manufacturer instructions
- D. A botanical hand sanitizer rated 70% ethanol

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**4. The hyponychium is BEST described as:**

- A. The whitish half-moon at the nail base
- B. The fold of skin at the nail sides
- C. The seal of skin under the free edge
- D. Living skin directly over the matrix



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**5. A client's skin is accidentally nicked and bleeds during a manicure. Under Standard Precautions, the nail technician should treat this situation as though:**

- A. The blood is infectious only if the client discloses a known bloodborne disease
- B. The blood poses no risk because the cut is superficial
- C. All blood and body fluids are potentially infectious regardless of the client's health status
- D. Gloves are needed only when the technician has an open wound on their own hands

**6. A client's lunula appears unusually large and pale. This most directly reflects the condition of which structure?**

- A. Nail bed
- B. Matrix
- C. Hyponychium
- D. Nail groove

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**7. Which of the following body fluids is classified as an Other Potentially Infectious Material (OPIM) under OSHA's Bloodborne Pathogens Standard?**

- A. Sweat
- B. Synovial fluid
- C. Tears
- D. Saliva from normal conversation

**8. Which nail structure contains nerves and blood vessels that nourish the nail plate?**

- A. Nail mantle
- B. Bed epithelium
- C. Free edge
- D. Nail bed

**9. A nail technician uses a terry cloth buffer block on one client and then places it in a closed drawer for the next client. This practice violates infection-control rules because:**

- A. Porous, absorbent implements like terry cloth buffers are single-use items and cannot be disinfected
- B. Buffer blocks must soak in disinfectant solution for at least 20 minutes
- C. Only metal implements are permitted to be reused after disinfection
- D. Buffer blocks must be stored in UV sanitizing cabinets between uses



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**10. The bed epithelium is significant because it:**

- A. Produces the nail plate
- B. Guides the nail plate as it grows forward
- C. Prevents bacterial entry under the free edge
- D. Forms the lunula

**11. An EPA-registered disinfectant label states a 10-minute contact time. A technician sprays a metal nail form, wipes it dry after 3 minutes, and uses it on the next client. What is the problem with this procedure?**

- A. The 3-minute contact time is sufficient for metal surfaces even if the label says 10 minutes
- B. Metal implements cannot be disinfected with spray disinfectants
- C. Spray application is never acceptable; immersion is always required
- D. The surface was not kept wet for the full manufacturer-required contact time, so disinfection was not achieved

**12. The eponychium differs from the cuticle in that the eponychium is:**

- A. Non-living skin
- B. Living skin at the nail base covering the matrix
- C. The nail groove lining
- D. The hyponychium of toenails

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**13. Which document must manufacturers provide for every hazardous chemical used in a salon, and must be accessible to all employees during their shift?**

- A. EPA Registration Certificate
- B. Material Safety Compliance Report (MSCR)
- C. Safety Data Sheet (SDS)
- D. OSHA Form 300 Injury Log

**14. Nails are composed primarily of which protein?**

- A. Collagen
- B. Elastin
- C. Hard keratin
- D. Melanin



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**15. A salon uses a quat (quaternary ammonium compound) disinfectant solution. After several hours of use, a technician notices the solution looks cloudy and has visible debris. What is the correct action?**

- A. Continue using the solution because quat disinfectants remain effective even when visibly contaminated
- B. Discard the contaminated solution, clean and dry the container, and prepare a fresh solution
- C. Filter the debris out and continue using the solution until the end of the day
- D. Add more concentrated disinfectant to the existing solution to restore its strength

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**16. On which finger does the nail grow the FASTEST?**

- A. Thumb
- B. Index finger
- C. Middle finger
- D. Ring finger

**17. Under OSHA's Bloodborne Pathogens Standard, a used nail implement contaminated with blood is considered:**

- A. Regulated waste only if the blood is still wet and visible
- B. Safe for normal trash disposal once the blood has dried
- C. Only hazardous if the client tested positive for a bloodborne pathogen
- D. Potentially infectious regulated waste that must be handled with gloves and disposed of per exposure-control plan procedures

**18. Average nail growth per month is approximately:**

- A. 1/4 inch
- B. 1/10 inch
- C. 1/2 inch
- D. 1/8 inch

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**19. A whirlpool foot spa must be disinfected after every client. In addition, what additional disinfection step is required at the END of each business day?**

- A. The spa must be drained and left empty overnight; no additional step is needed
- B. The spa must be cleaned, then filled with an EPA-registered disinfectant solution and allowed to circulate for the full manufacturer-required contact time before draining
- C. The spa must be filled with clean water and left running for 10 minutes
- D. The spa must be wiped down with a single-use alcohol wipe and the drain cover removed

**20. The nail plate is attached to the nail bed by which structure?**

- A. Lunula
- B. Matrix
- C. Bed epithelium
- D. Nail mantle

**21. Methyl methacrylate (MMA) monomer is banned for use in nail salons by most U.S. state boards primarily because:**

- A. It causes severe skin sensitization, allergic reactions, and irreversible damage to the nail plate, and was prohibited by the FDA for use in nail products
- B. It is not approved by the EPA as a salon disinfectant
- C. It reacts violently with quaternary ammonium disinfectants used in salons
- D. It produces a nail enhancement that is too soft and breaks too easily

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**22. Which part of the nail is considered a 'stress area' most vulnerable to breakage?**

- A. The area near the cuticle
- B. The free edge
- C. The area where the nail tip transitions to the natural nail
- D. The lunula

**23. Proper salon ventilation is required primarily to protect nail technicians from which occupational hazard?**

- A. Cross-contamination of implements through airborne transmission of bacterial spores
- B. Cumulative overexposure to chemical vapors and dust from nail products, which can cause respiratory sensitization and systemic harm
- C. Slipping on wet floors near the sink area
- D. UV radiation emitted by LED curing lamps during gel services



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**24. A technician notices the nail plate has a yellow-brown discoloration that starts from the free edge inward. The MOST likely cause is:**

- A. Matrix damage
- B. Nail staining from polish or smoking
- C. Damage to the nail bed only
- D. Healthy nail growth

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**25. Which of the following implements CAN be properly disinfected and reused on a new client after following the correct disinfection protocol?**

- A. Pumice stone
- B. Nail file (emery board)
- C. Stainless steel cuticle nipper
- D. Wooden cuticle pusher

**26. The nail mantle is the:**

- A. Dead cuticle tissue
- B. Deep fold of skin that covers the nail root
- C. Seal under the free edge
- D. Connection between the nail groove and nail bed

**27. Which part of the nail is responsible for producing the nail plate?**

- A. Matrix
- B. Nail bed
- C. Hyponychium
- D. Lunula

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**28. Which statement about nail growth is MOST accurate?**

- A. Nails grow fastest in cold climates
- B. Dominant hand nails grow faster due to increased circulation
- C. Toenails grow at the same rate as fingernails
- D. Growth rate is unaffected by nutrition



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**29. The visible white half-moon shape at the base of the nail plate is called the:**

- A. Eponychium
- B. Free edge
- C. Hyponychium
- D. Lunula

**30. The nail plate is translucent; its pinkish color comes from:**

- A. Melanin in the plate
- B. Blood in the nail bed beneath it
- C. Keratin pigmentation
- D. The lunula color



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## Answer Key & Explanations

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### 1. A — Sterilization

Sterilization is the only process that destroys all forms of microbial life including the most resistant bacterial spores, and is the highest level of decontamination recognized in infection-control standards.

### 2. C — Matrix

### 3. C — An EPA-registered, hospital-grade disinfectant used per manufacturer instructions

Regulatory and Milady standards require an EPA-registered, hospital-grade disinfectant for foot spas and all salon surfaces because only EPA-registered products have proven, tested efficacy claims that can legally appear on the label.

### 4. C — The seal of skin under the free edge

### 5. C — All blood and body fluids are potentially infectious regardless of the client's health status

Standard Precautions, established by the CDC and adopted in salon safety curricula, require treating ALL blood and potentially infectious body fluids as if they are contaminated, regardless of any known diagnosis.

### 6. B — Matrix

### 7. B — Synovial fluid

OSHA's Bloodborne Pathogens Standard specifically lists synovial fluid among OPIM because it may contain blood or bloodborne pathogens; sweat and tears are not listed as OPIM.

### 8. D — Nail bed

### 9. A — Porous, absorbent implements like terry cloth buffers are single-use items and cannot be disinfected

Porous and absorbent implements (files, buffers, wooden sticks) cannot be effectively disinfected because liquid disinfectants do not penetrate porous materials; they must be used on one client only and then discarded.

### 10. B — Guides the nail plate as it grows forward

### 11. D — The surface was not kept wet for the full manufacturer-required contact time, so disinfection was not achieved

EPA-registered disinfectants must remain in full wet contact with the surface for the entire contact time listed on the label; wiping dry before that time is up means the product did not have sufficient time to kill the required pathogens.

### 12. B — Living skin at the nail base covering the matrix

### 13. C — Safety Data Sheet (SDS)

OSHA's Hazard Communication Standard (HazCom/Right-to-Know) requires that a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) — formerly called MSDS — be available for every hazardous chemical and accessible to employees at all



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times during the work shift.

**14. C — Hard keratin**

**15. B — Discard the contaminated solution, clean and dry the container, and prepare a fresh solution**

Organic debris (skin cells, blood, product residue) inactivates quaternary ammonium compounds and other disinfectants; visibly contaminated solutions must be discarded and replaced with fresh solution in a clean container to maintain efficacy.

**16. C — Middle finger**

**17. D — Potentially infectious regulated waste that must be handled with gloves and disposed of per exposure-control plan procedures**

OSHA classifies items contaminated with blood or OPIM as regulated waste regardless of whether the blood has dried, because dried blood can still harbor viable bloodborne pathogens such as HBV.

**18. B — 1/10 inch**

**19. B — The spa must be cleaned, then filled with an EPA-registered disinfectant solution and allowed to circulate for the full manufacturer-required contact time before draining**

Standard nail-tech infection-control protocols (reflected in most state board rules and Milady curriculum) require an end-of-day disinfection cycle where the whirlpool circulates EPA-registered disinfectant for the full contact time to eliminate biofilm buildup in the internal plumbing.

**20. C — Bed epithelium**

**21. A — It causes severe skin sensitization, allergic reactions, and irreversible damage to the nail plate, and was prohibited by the FDA for use in nail products**

The FDA took action against MMA because it causes serious adverse effects including irreversible nail damage and severe allergic sensitization; most state boards subsequently banned it from professional nail services, reflecting the NIC and Milady standard curriculum warning.

**22. C — The area where the nail tip transitions to the natural nail**

**23. B — Cumulative overexposure to chemical vapors and dust from nail products, which can cause respiratory sensitization and systemic harm**

The overexposure principle in nail-tech curriculum and OSHA guidelines identifies chronic inhalation of monomer vapors, acrylic dust, and solvent fumes as a leading occupational hazard; local exhaust ventilation (LEV) at the table is the primary engineering control.

**24. B — Nail staining from polish or smoking**

**25. C — Stainless steel cuticle nipper**

Non-porous metal implements such as stainless steel nippers can be thoroughly cleaned, fully immersed in or exposed to EPA-registered disinfectant for the required contact time, and reused; porous items like emery boards, wooden sticks, and pumice stones cannot be effectively disinfected and must be discarded after one use.

**26. B — Deep fold of skin that covers the nail root**



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**27. A — Matrix**

The matrix contains the germinal cells that actively divide and produce the nail plate; damage to the matrix can result in permanent nail deformity.

**28. B — Dominant hand nails grow faster due to increased circulation**

**29. D — Lunula**

The lunula is the visible portion of the matrix that appears as a white, half-moon shape at the base of the nail plate, most visible on the thumb.

**30. B — Blood in the nail bed beneath it**



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