

Covid-19 Safety Practices for Henna Artists

You deserve to be and to feel safe. You are empowered to set boundaries that protect both you and your clients.

As henna artists, we have a responsibility to protect our clients. In the past, that has meant using safe product and good hygiene practices. Today that also means protecting ourselves and our clients from a disease that doesn't yet have a treatment. Keep in mind, you aren't just protecting yourself and your client from Covid-19, but also their families. By using responsible practices, we can help protect our community from dangerous outbreaks.

The goal is to avoid transmission due to droplets. These droplets don't just spread during sneezes and coughs. Every breath you expel and every word you speak expels droplets. Those droplets can then be spread either by breathing them in or by touching a surface with contaminated droplets then touching your face.

Much like cars have both seatbelts AND airbags, layered protection is the best protection for you and your clients. Use as many layers of protections as possible.

General Safety Practices

- **Wear a mask.**
If you have access to an N95 mask, this protects BOTH you and your client. If you do not have access to an N95 mask, be aware that you are giving your client a level of protection, but your own protection is limited. Wear a face shield as well, especially if you are in a group setting.
- **Require clients to wear masks or face coverings.**
If they don't want to wear a mask, you have every right to refuse service. Consider offering some masks for sale (either disposable or not) so you don't have to turn clients away. Create "masks required" signage.
- **Ensure your set-up is comprised of easily sanitized items.**
No fabric chairs or tablecloths. Instead of a fabric table covering, use either a wipe-able outdoor-style tablecloth or use a transparent table covering over fabric. A clear shower curtain works well. If you use toothpicks or cuticle sticks to remove mistakes, these are disposable items. They cannot be sanitized and thus should be disposed of once used. Henna cone tips should be wiped with alcohol between clients or make tiny little individual cones for each client.
- **No more design books.**
Our lovely henna designs books that we've worked so hard to build are now a potential liability. Change to some sort of vertical display of henna designs that do not require people to touch them.
- **Avoid enclosed spaces.**
When possible, henna in outdoor or well ventilated spaces. Avoid small rooms or cubicles. Set up a fan to push air away from yourself and your client.
- **Collect contact-tracing information.**
If you or one of your clients contracts the Coronavirus, you will need the contact information of everyone you've been in contact with, including clients. This information should be kept completely private and should be eliminated after 30 days (or whatever local regulations determine).

Encourage clients to get henna on their forearm, foot, or calf rather than hands. Since we are washing and using hand sanitizer more, hand stains are fading 50-70% faster than normal. Forearm henna doesn't get as dark as hand henna, but it will last SUBSTANTIALLY longer.

Covid-19 Safety Practices for Henna Artists

Group Events

Group events add an additional layer of risk. We don't want to be responsible for starting an outbreak that hurts someone. We can't control everything, but we can add as many safety precautions as possible. It is our responsibility to keep our clients safe. Layer those protections!

Modify your contract to include all necessary changes. Speak with the event organizer about all concerns and check to see if they are keeping a contact-tracing list.

- **Wash your hands.**
Before starting your event, wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water.
- **Have clients wash hands, if possible.**
If it's a small private party, require clients wash hands before getting henna.
- **Have clients use an individual alcohol wipe on both hands.**
If you are in a setting where clients can't wash their hands, provide individual alcohol wipes for clients to use before sitting down. Create signage so that clients have already used these wipes before getting to you.

Remember hand sanitizer can interfere with henna stains, so don't use hand sanitizer on clients. Washing hands and rubbing alcohol are best.
- **Set up a barrier between you and clients when possible.**
The Plexiglas dividers that are used in nail salons are ideal. They have a space where the client can slip their arm through. They make smaller ones that are portable.
- **Sanitize everything possible between clients.**
If you don't have the time to wipe down the table between clients, use something disposable such as paper towels, paper, or disposable placemats that can be changed between each client. Use hand sanitizer on yourself. For gloves to be effective, they must be changed between every client. Hand sanitizer is just as effective with far less waste.
- **Manage lines for social distancing.**
Do whatever works best for your needs and event. Create signage that encourages physical distancing. Use painters tape and mark 6" distances in your line. Small cones that are used for sports can also be used for line control. Pennant banners can easily be strung up, and you can get them in your brand colors at nearly any party store.
- **Remember to wash your hands again when you finish.**
After you sanitize the area and pack up, wash your hands again and apply lotion. Do not allow your hands to get dry enough to crack.

Covid-19 Safety Practices for Henna Artists

Private Appointments

If private appointments are scheduled at your own studio, you have more control over your environment. Take advantage of that to create the safest space possible. If you are meeting somewhere, consider what kinds of precautions/controls you are able to ensure.

- **Wash hands.**
Require that BOTH you and your client wash your hands for at least 20 seconds using soap and water. If you are lucky enough to be in a situation where this is possible, be diligent about it. Add signage near the sink with proper hand-washing technique.

Remember hand sanitizer can interfere with henna stains, so don't use hand sanitizer on clients. Washing hands and rubbing alcohol are best.
- **Set up a barrier, when possible.**
The Plexiglas dividers that are used in nail salons are ideal. They have a space where the client can slip their arm through. Depending on what part of the body you are hennaing, this may not be possible, but use it when you can.
- **Prop feet away from client.**
Remember, droplets go down not up. If you are below your client, you are at substantially higher risk. Try to prop the feet in a way that you are not directly below the client's face. Think of how far away from a client's face a pedicurist is sitting and aim for that. Be sure the client's mask is on properly. If you don't have a face shield, wear a hat or visor.
- **Sanitize the entire area between clients.**
Be diligent and sanitize all touch-surfaces and anywhere droplets may have landed, between each client.
- **Wash your hands again when you finish.**
After you sanitize the entire area, wash your hands again and apply lotion. Don't allow your hands to get dry enough to crack.

Potential Supply List

In addition to your typical henna supplies, some of these supplies may be helpful.

- Individual alcohol swabs
- Disposable masks (always have extra in case yours or a clients mask breaks)
- Face shield
- Disposable placemats
- Wipeable table cover
- Cuticle sticks/cut straws (disposable)
- Plexiglas divider and cleaner
- Hand sanitizer for you
- Floor cones/painters' tape/pennant banners
- Signage
 - Masks required
 - Proper hand-washing
 - Stop germs signage
 - Physical distancing reminders
 - Line control signage