



Practice Clarification

OREGON HEALTH LICENSING AGENCY

Cosmetology – Nail Technology

February 20, 2014

In an effort to provide clarification regarding nail technology services the Oregon Health Licensing Agency sought legal advice from General Counsel at the Department of Justice. Response to the following question is as follows:

Question: Are nail technicians allowed to gently push back the pterygium on a client's nail after we've applied cuticle softener and soaked in a hand bath?

Answer: No. According to Milady's Standard Nail Technology Text Book, Fifth Edition, page 149 *nail pterygium* is an abnormal condition that occurs when skin is stretched by the nail plate. This disorder is usually caused by serious injury, such as burns or an adverse skin reaction to chemical nail enhancement products. The terms "cuticle" and "pterygium" are not the same thing, and they should never be used interchangeably. Nail pterygium is abnormal, that is, damage to the eponychium or hyponychium. The act of pushing back the pterygium on a client's nail is not in the scope of practice of a nail technician because nail services cannot be performed for medical diagnosis or treatment of disease or physical or mental ailments. Further, according to Milady's, pushing the extension of skin back with an instrument could cause more injury to the tissues and make the condition worse.

Important Note: The Agency does not provide personal legal advice to licensees or members of the public. The responses listed here are specific to only those questions asked. Even slight changes in the scope or content of the question may change the applicability of these responses in a different situation. Please consult your own attorney for legal advice regarding Oregon laws and administrative rules.