

Chemical in glue banned in U.S., legal in Canada

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A chemical in the glue may eat away at the nail, causing it to fall off. In many cases, it won't grow back.

Dr. William Linton of Richmond Hill said there isn't a good treatment for this condition.

"Some people try injecting steroids under the nail. You can imagine it's not very pleasant. It hurts, but there's no consistently good treatment."

While the chemical in the glue has been banned in the United States, it is still legal in Canada.

Another common problem in the application of false nails is infection. If not applied firmly enough, false nails allow air or water in.

This creates the perfect conditions for fungi and mould that live on the skin. In such cases, the nails may become distorted or lose or change colour.

They must be treated with antifungals and may take about three months to correct.

In recent years, the number of nail salons has grown rapidly. The danger is many of them market fast service and they're not taking the time to do things right.

"I've seen some really bad things," said Tara Setni, manager of Rocchetti's in

Richmond Hill. "They're damaging people's nails very badly."

Too often, she said, salons are working too quickly. When removing the nails, for instance, technicians should be soaking them off. Instead, they pull them off, hurting the nail.

"It's a quick fix. They don't take the time," Ms Setni said.

At Rocchetti's, a basic nail tips service costs \$55 and takes anywhere from 1-1/4 hour to two hours.

"But some (salons) do it in 20 to 30 minutes. In that case, they're really just slapping them on. Watch what they're doing," Ms Setni said.

KEEP A CLOSE EYE

Ms. Pittman would agree customers should always keep a close eye on technicians.

"A big issue is the whole lack of education and knowledge about infection control among personal service workers. They just don't realize the service they're offering can put people at quite serious risk."

As a personal service industry, nail salons are inspected once a year. After a first, impromptu visit to examine practices and general hygiene, the inspectors return and spend time reviewing with the technicians the guidelines set out in

the protocol from the Ministry of Health.

While inspectors visit most area nail salons, Ms Pittman said they're bound to miss some. That's because they can only visit the ones they know about and of all area municipalities, only Vaughan requires salons to be licensed.

"There's a huge home industry that (inspectors) don't regulate and usually don't know about because they're not streetfront or we're not notified they're opening. They run the business from their home and find out about them through word of mouth."

Such salons are not inspected unless the owner calls to ask for an inspection or the department receives a complaint.

When choosing a salon, Ms Pittman said consumers should watch constantly for cleanliness of implements and surfaces. They should watch to see single-use implements, such as nail files and buffing blocks, really are used only once.

As well, tools should be stored away from the air so they are not contaminated by the nail dust.

For more information, call the Health Connection Information line at 1-800-361-5653.



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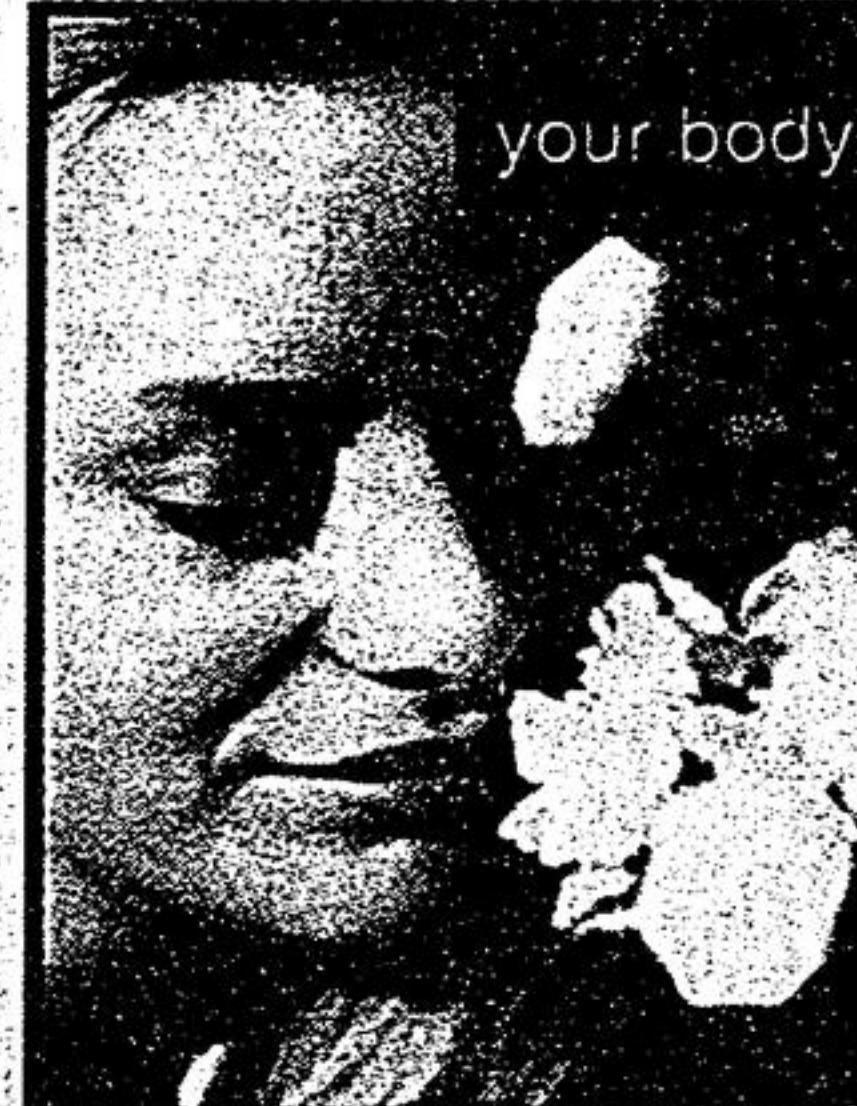
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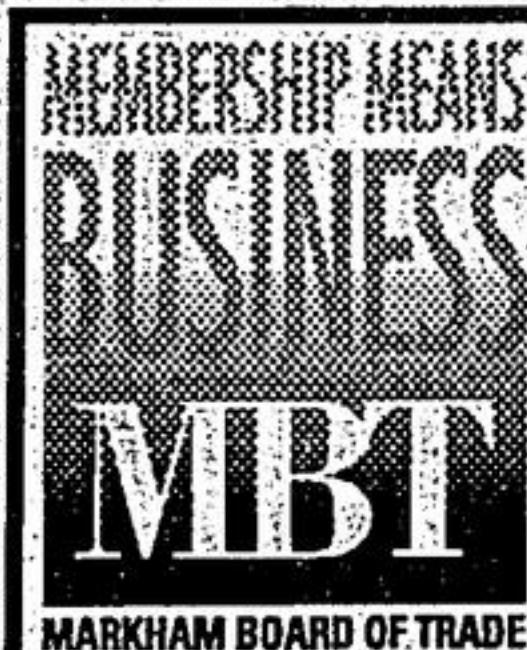


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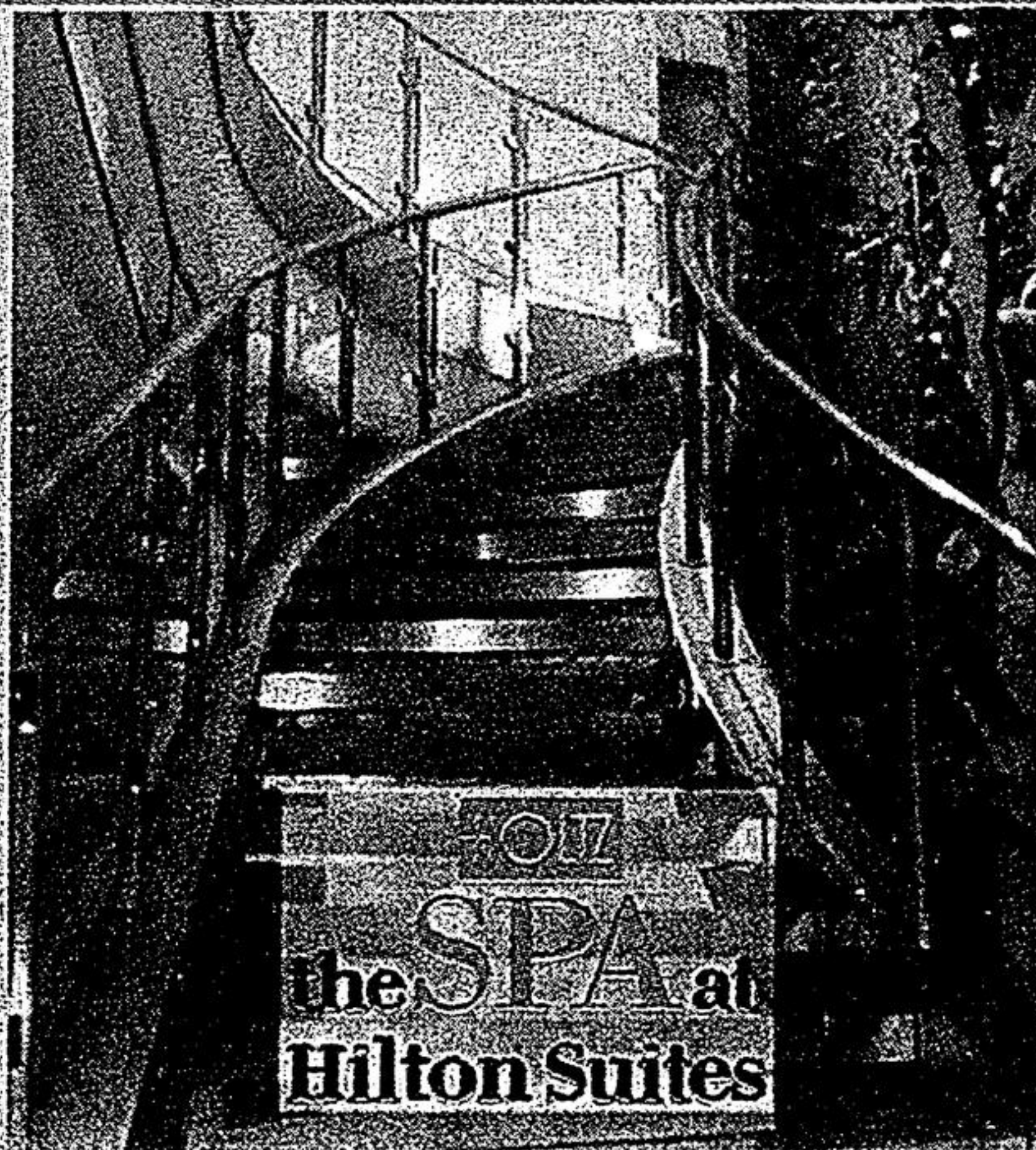
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