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## MMA

### *The Truth Behind The Controversy*

One of the most controversial topics in the professional beauty industry involves a monomer liquid called MMA or methyl methacrylate. Unfortunately, there are many myths and misunderstandings surrounding the use of this ingredient. Most nail technicians know they should not use products that contain this ingredient, but they don't know why! This lack of proper information opens the door for speculation and rumors.

Generally, when you ask someone why MMA should not be used they will immediately respond that MMA is toxic. Although it is true that you should not drink MMA monomer liquid, the same holds true for salt water and rubbing alcohol. MMA is not a human cancer causing agent and it does not absorb through the nail plate to affect the health of clients or nail technicians. Nor is it dangerous to inhale in the salon environment. Scientific information collected about MMA shows that toxicity is NOT the reason MMA makes a poor nail enhancement ingredient. In fact, for many years MMA has been safely implanted in the body as a bone repair cement-so it is not a dangerous toxin, as many imagine.

Then why should MMA not be used? There are four main reasons:

1. MMA nail products do not adhere well to the nail plate. To make these products adhere, nail technicians often shred up the surface of the nail with an abrasive or electric file. This thins the nail plate and makes it weaker.
2. MMA creates the hardest and most rigid nail enhancements, which makes them very difficult to break. When jammed or caught, the overly filed and thinned natural nail plate will often break before the MMA enhancement, leading to serious nail damage.
3. MMA is extremely difficult to remove. Since it will not dissolve in product removers, it is usually pried from the nail plate, creating still more damage.
4. The FDA says don't use it! This clearly is the most important reason. The FDA bases their prohibition on the large number of consumer complaints resulting from the use of MMA nail enhancements in the late 70's and they continue to maintain this position today.

For these reasons, the Nail Manufacturers Council and the Professional Beauty Association have also taken a stance against the use of MMA liquid monomer as an ingredient in artificial nail liquids. Not because MMA is toxic, but because it is an unsuitable ingredient. Creative Nail Design® agrees with this position. MMA is a widely used monomer with a long history of safe use in medical and dental products. It is fine for making bulletproof windows and shatterproof eyeglasses. However, we believe that artificial nails should not only be beautiful, they should not damage the natural nail. They are enhancements, not replacements! We also believe it is the responsibility of all professional nail technicians to protect the health of their clients' natural nails. A good place to start is by using responsibly formulated products and to learn safe and proper techniques.

We at Creative Nail Design® hope you will join us, along with other responsible manufacturers and educate your clients on this important issue. Don't use scare tactics! Teach them the truth, so they can become wise and informed clients. That is how we can all grow professionally and assist our industry in continuing to evolve in a positive direction.