CHAPTER OUTLINE

Pedicure Supplies • Pedicures
Foot Massage • More About Pedicuring
Pedicure Instruments

PROCEDURES

11-1 Giving a Pedicure
11-2 The Full-service Pedicure
Learning Objectives

After you have completed this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Identify the equipment and materials needed for a pedicure and explain what they are used for.
2. List the steps in the pedicure pre-service procedure.
3. Demonstrate the proper procedures and precautions for a pedicure.
4. Describe the proper technique to use in filing toenails.
5. Describe the proper technique for trimming the nails.
6. Demonstrate your ability to perform foot massage properly.

Key Terms

Page number indicates where in the chapter the term is used.

curette  
pg. 213

cuticle nippers  
pg. 214

diamond nail file  
pg. 214
effleurage  
pg. 207
foot files (paddles)  
pg. 214
friction movement  
pg. 209
hand manipulation  
pg. 207
massage  
pg. 207
massage oils  
pg. 211
nail rasp  
pg. 213
pedicure  
pg. 201
petrissage  
pg. 207
scrubs  
pg. 211
soaks  
pg. 210
tapotement  
pg. 207
toenail nippers  
pg. 213
he information in this chapter will show you the pedicuring skills you need to care for clients' feet, toes, and toenails. A pedicure includes trimming, shaping, and polishing toenails as well as foot massage. Pedicures are a standard service performed by nail technicians. They are a basic part of good foot care and are particularly important for clients who are joggers, dancers, and cosmetologists. All these groups are particularly dependent on their feet for their livelihood or enjoyment. Once the client experiences the comfort and relaxation of a good pedicure they will return for more. If you really analyze it, pedicure services are for everyone. Not all clients will want or need a full pedicure service. Some only need a professional nail trimming. Do not limit yourself. Tailor your pedicure service to meet the needs of your entire clientele. Monthly pedicures should be promoted for healthy, happy feet, as they are in constant use and need routine maintenance. Proper foot care, through pedicuring, improves both personal appearance and basic foot comfort.

Here’s a Tip:
When making an appointment for a pedicure, suggest that your client wear open-toe shoes or sandals so that polish will not smear. Also remind your client that hose will need to be removed before the pedicure can be performed.

**Pedicure Supplies**

You will need the following supplies in addition to your standard manicure set-up to perform pedicures (Figures 11–1 and 11–2).

**Pedicuring Station**
A station includes a comfortable chair with armrests for the client, a footrest for the client, and a chair for the nail technician. Pedicure stations that combine all these items into one piece of furniture are available.

**Pedicuring Stool and Footrest**
A pedicuring stool is a low stool that will make it easier for you to work on your client's feet. Some pedicuring stools come with a footrest for the client, or a separate footrest can be used.

**Pedicure Basin or Bath**
The pedicure bath is filled with warm water and liquid soap to soak the client's feet. The bath must be large enough to completely immerse the client's feet.

**Toe Separators**
Foam rubber toe separators or cotton used to keep toes apart during the pedicure.

**Foot File or Paddle**
Used to remove dry skin or callus growths.
Toenail Clippers
Two types of toenail clippers are available; both are acceptable for a professional pedicure.

Antiseptic Foot Spray
This spray contains an antifungal (an-ti-FUN-gahl) agent as well as a mild antiseptic.

Liquid Soap
Liquid soap for pedicuring contains a soap or very mild detergent, an antifungal agent, and an antibacterial agent.

Foot Cream
Foot cream is used during foot massage. Hand lotion can also be used.

Foot Powder
Foot powder contains an antifungal agent for keeping feet dry after pedicure.

Pedicure Slippers
Disposable paper or foam slippers are needed for those clients who have not worn open-toe shoes.

PEDICURES
As with other procedures, a pedicure involves three parts: the pre-service, the pedicure procedure, and the post-service. In the pre-service you will sanitize your implements, greet your client, and do a client consultation. Next you will do the steps involved in the actual procedure. Then, in the post-service, you will schedule another appointment for your client, sell the retail products you discussed during the service, sanitize your area, and disinfect all reusable implements.

Pedicure Pre-service
Your pedicure area should be close to a sink so it is convenient when you fill the pedicure baths with water.
1. Complete your pre-service sanitation procedure. (This procedure is described on pages 41-43.)
2. Your station should be set up to include a pedicuring stool, client’s chair, and a footrest for your client.
3. Spread one terry cloth towel on the floor in front of client’s chair to put feet on during the pedicure. Put another towel over the footrest to dry feet.
4. Set up your standard manicuring table at your pedicuring station. Add toe separators, foot file, toenail clippers, antiseptic antifungal foot spray, soap, foot cream, foot powder, and pedicure slippers to your table.
5. Fill basin with warm water. Add a measured amount of liquid soap to the bath (follow manufacturer’s directions).

6. Greet your client with a smile.

7. Complete the client consultation. Use your client record/health form to record responses and observations. Check for nail disorders and decide if it is safe and appropriate to perform a service on your client. If infection or inflammation is present, refer your client to his or her physician. If athlete’s foot is present, you must not perform a pedicure.

**Pedicure Service**

When using a manufacturer’s product line, it is recommended that you follow those procedures. They have been tested and found to enhance the effectiveness of their product line. You should time the individual steps of the pedicure based on the time suggested by the manufacturer to complete the entire service economically and efficiently. Do not give the client the feeling of being rushed, but develop your procedures so there are no wasted motions. Have your instruments and products within easy reach (Figure 11–3). There should be no distractions for you or the client during the pedicure. You should, at all times during the pedicure, know what your client’s expectations of the service are. Make the client feel that you have nothing more to do than to take care of their every wish. Talk to them if they want to talk, but if they want to drift off, give them the peace and tranquility they are looking for.

Be gentle, but firm, when handling the foot. A gentle, light touch or hold will produce a tickling sensation, which is not relaxing. The client will become tense and pull away from the pedicurist during the service. Many people say that they cannot stand having their feet touched. A firm, but comfortable, grip on the foot will help to overcome this problem (Figure 11–4). In most instances, when working on the foot, it should be grasp between the thumb and fingers at the midtarsal area. This accomplishes two things. It locks the foot, making it rigid instead of being quite flexible and loose. It also allows the placing of the thumb or index finger at that point on the plantar aspect of the foot, where the two skin creases meet on the ball. This spot is usually located at the beginning of the longitudinal arch. Applying varying degrees of pressure to this point seems to have a calming effect on the client and overcomes any apprehension about someone touching his or her feet.

The actual performance of the pedicure can be divided into five basic steps: the soak, nail care, skin care, massage, and polishing of the nails (optional). Each of these steps is distinct from the other. Depending on client needs, some steps may not be necessary. For example, some clients may only need nail care. This should take approximately 15 minutes and other steps of the full pedicure may be eliminated. If you have a great massage technique, clients may want only the soak and a massage to relieve tension and stress after a day’s work. Remember, be innovative and creative when it comes to your pedicure services.

**SAFETY**

Be sure the floor around the pedicure area is dry because wet floors are slippery. You or your clients can fall. When water is spilled, wipe it up immediately.

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**Figure 11-3** A portable pedicure supply cart containing all the instruments and supplies for a pedicure.

**Figure 11-4** “X” marks the spot – Applying pressure to this area on a ticklish or apprehensive client will have a calming effect.
During the procedure, talk with your client about the products that are needed to maintain the service between salon visits. You might suggest polish, top coat, foot cream, and a foot file.

1. **Remove shoes and socks.** Ask your client to remove shoes, socks, and hose and roll pant legs to the knees.

2. **Spray feet.** Spray feet with foot spray or wipe them with antiseptic (Figure 11–5).

3. **Soak feet.** Put client’s feet in soap bath for 5–10 minutes to wash and sanitize the feet before you begin the pedicure (Figure 11–6).

4. **Dry feet thoroughly.** Make sure you dry between the toes. Ask client to place both feet on the towel you have placed on the floor (Figure 11–7).

5. **Remove polish.** Remove polish from little toe on left foot working towards big toe. Repeat with the right foot (Figure 11–8).

6. **Clip nails.** Clip the toenails of the left foot so that they are even with the end of the toe (Figure 11–9). See more information on nail clippers on page 169.
7. **Insert toe separators.** Use both hands to carefully insert toe separators or cotton between the toes of the left foot (Figure 11–10). Repeat steps 6 and 7 on the right foot.

8. **File nails.** File the nails of the left foot with an emery board. File them straight across, rounding them slightly at the corners to conform to the shape of the toes. Smooth rough edges with the fine side of an emery board (Figure 11–11). Repeat this step on the other foot.

9. **Use foot file.** Use foot file on ball and heel of foot to remove dry skin and callus growths. Do not file too much because it can cause irritation and bleeding (Figure 11–12).

10. **Rinse foot.** Remove toe separators and place left foot in foot bath.

11. **Repeat steps 9 and 10 on right foot.**

12. **Brush nails.** While the left foot is in the foot bath, brush nails with nail brush. Remove the foot and dry thoroughly. Insert toe separators or cotton between toes (Figure 11–13).

13. **Apply cuticle solvent.** Use a new cotton-tipped orangewood stick to apply cuticle solvent to left foot. Begin with the little toe and work toward the big toe. You may apply solvent under free edge as well to soften excess skin beneath it (Figure 11–14).

14. **Push back cuticle.** On left foot, gently push cuticles with the new orangewood stick or metal pusher. If cuticle clipping is permitted in your state, clip only to remove a hangnail (Figure 11–15).

15. **Brush foot.** Remove toe separators. Ask your client to dip left foot into soap bath. With the left foot over the soap bath, brush with nail brush to remove bits of cuticle and solvent. Dry the foot thoroughly and place foot on towel.
16. **Apply lotion.** Apply lotion to foot for massage. Use a firm touch to avoid tickling your client’s feet (Figure 11–16).

17. **Massage foot.** Perform foot massage on the left foot. Then place foot on a clean towel on the floor. (See foot massage techniques on pages 208–209.)

18. **Proceed with steps 12-17 on the right foot.**

19. **Remove traces of lotion.** Remove traces of lotion from toenails of both feet with a small piece of cotton that has been saturated with polish remover.

20. **Apply polish.** Reinsert the toe separators. Apply base coat, two coats of color, and top coat to toenails. Spray with instant nail dry. Place feet on a towel to dry.

21. **Powder feet.** When polish is dry, powder feet before the client puts shoes on.

**Pedicure Post-service**

Your pedicure is not complete until you have performed the following (Figure 11–17).

1. **Make another appointment.** Schedule another pedicure appointment for your client.

2. **Advise client.** Advise client about proper foot care. Remind client that wearing tight shoes and very high heels can cause problems with the feet.

3. **Sell retail products.** Suggest that your client buy products you have discussed during the pedicure. Products such as polish, foot cream, and top coat help to maintain the pedicure.

4. **Clean pedicure area.** Drain or empty out basin and wipe it with a hospital-grade disinfectant to sanitize. Dry basin thoroughly. Wipe table and footrest with a hospital-grade disinfectant.

5. **Discard used materials.** Place all used materials in the plastic bag at the side of the table. If the bag is full, discard it in a closed pail.

6. **Sanitize table and implements.** Perform the complete pre-service sanitation procedure. In most states this procedure calls for 20 minutes of proper disinfection before implements can be used on the next client. Return your table to its basic set-up.
FOOT MASSAGE

Massage is defined in the medical dictionary as “a method of manipulation of the body by rubbing, pinching, kneading, tapping, etc.” The art of massage has probably been around since the beginning of time. Touch is the first of our senses to develop and under normal circumstances the last to diminish. Most of us enjoy being touched and the art of massage takes touching to a higher level. Foot massage during a pedicure stimulates blood flow and is relaxing to the client.

There are three basic forms of hand manipulation utilized in therapeutic massage. These consist of

- light or hard stroking movements called effleurage.
- compression movements called petrissage, which includes kneading, squeezing, and friction.
- percussion or tapotement, where the sides of the hands are used to strike the skin and underlying tissues in rapid succession.

Effleurage relaxes muscles, and improves circulation to the small, surface blood vessels. It is also thought to increase blood flow toward the heart. Petrissage helps to increase movement by stretching muscles, tendons, and any scar tissue present from previous injuries. Tapotement is also a technique for improving circulation.

There are a number of massage styles and techniques. No matter what technique you use, perfect it so that it becomes second nature to you. Study and practice different methods to individualize the massage for different clients. During this part of the pedicure, be keenly aware of your client’s needs and meet those requirements by giving a massage that fulfills them.
The amount of pressure applied during the massage should be only as deep as is comfortable for you and your client. Ask the client whether they would like more or less pressure. Be aware of what areas or parts of the massage the client enjoys most and work those areas more. Work toward the heart to facilitate circulation. Keep your wrists straight in order to reduce stress and strain on yourself. Do not favor your dominant hand; always remembering to alternate the pressures from one to the other. Attention to the fine details will make your massage stand out from others.

Foot Massage Techniques

These techniques and illustrations provide directions for massage of the left foot.

1. **Relaxer movement to the joints of the foot.** Rest client’s foot on footrest or stool. Grasp the leg just above the ankle with your left hand. This will brace the client’s leg and foot. Use your right hand to hold left foot just beneath toes and rotate foot in a circular motion (Figure 11–18).

2. **Effleurage on top of foot.** Place both thumbs on top of foot at instep. Move your thumbs in circular movements in opposite directions down the center of the top of the foot. Continue this movement to the toes. Keep one hand in contact with foot or leg, slide one hand at a time back firmly to instep and rotate back down to toes. This is a relaxing movement. Repeat 3–5 times (Figure 11–19).

3. **Effleurage on heel (bottom of foot).** Use the same thumb movement that you did in the previous massage technique. Start at the base of the toes and move from the ball of the foot to the heel, rotating your thumbs in opposite directions. Slide hands back to the top of the foot. This is a relaxing movement. Repeat 3–5 times (Figure 11–20).
4. **Effleurage movement on toes.** Start with the little toe, using thumb on top and index finger on bottom of foot. Hold each toe and rotate with thumb. Start at base of toe and work toward the end of the toes. This is relaxing and soothing. Repeat 3–5 times (Figure 11–21).

5. **Joint movement for toes.** Start with the little toe and make a figure eight with each toe. Repeat 3–5 times (Figure 11–22).

6. **Thumb compression—friction movement.** Make a fist with your fingers, keeping your thumb out. Apply firm pressure with your thumb and move your fist up the heel toward the ball of the foot. Work from the left side of foot and back down the right side toward the heel. As you massage over the bottom of the foot, check for any nodules or bumps. If you find one, be very gentle because the area may be tender. This movement stimulates the blood flow and increases circulation (Figure 11–23).

7. **Metatarsal scissors (a petrissage massage movement, kneading).** Place your fingers on top of foot along the metatarsal bones with your thumb underneath the foot. Knead up and down along each bone by raising your thumb and lower fingers to apply pressure. This promotes flexibility and stimulates blood flow. Repeat 3–5 times (Figure 11–24).

8. **Fist twist compression (a friction movement, deep rubbing).** Place left hand on top of foot and make a fist with your right hand. Your left hand will apply pressure while your right hand twists around the bottom of the foot. This helps stimulate blood flow. Repeat 3–5 times up and around foot (Figure 11–25).

9. **Effleurage on instep.** Place fingers at ball of foot. Move fingers in circular movements in opposite directions. Massage to end of each toe, gently squeezing the tip of each toe (Figure 11–26).

10. **Percussion or tapotement movement.** Use fingertips to perform percussion or tapotement (tah-POT-mynt) movements to lightly tap over the entire foot to reduce blood circulation and complete massage.

If the client has had any form of foot surgery, inquire as to whether or not massage is an acceptable procedure.
MORE ABOUT PEDICURING

The basic step-by-step pedicure procedure is a necessary learning tool to help you master a warranted and valuable service. There is, however, additional information needed to enable you to go beyond the basics. The products, implements, and equipment you will need to perform a pedicure are an important part of the service. The basic pedicure procedure is just the beginning. There is much more to come. When you become more proficient and begin to customize a pedicure, the following information will be indispensable in helping you accomplish that end.

Just as there are “systems” for nail enhancement products, so are there pedicure systems or lines available from many manufacturers of professional nail products. These manufacturers produce a complete line of products for the professional pedicure. It is recommended that you check out all of these lines. Compare them with each other and decide for yourself which is best for your clients. The educational support and commitment of the company is important in making this decision. Those companies that offer classes and training in the use of their line will be available when you have specific questions about individual client problems or their lines in general.

There are at least three basic product classes necessary for the pedicure service. Then, add-on products are available to enhance the pedicure service. The three basic product classes consist of:

1. soaks.
2. scrubs.
3. massage preparations.

Soaks

Soaks are products used in the pedicure bath to soften the skin of the foot. A good soak should contain a gentle soap to sanitize the foot, moisturizers or hydrating agents, and a surface-active substance to allow for deeper
penetration of the active ingredients. Dead sea salts are one of the ingredients often found in the better soaking agents. Because large amounts of therapeutic minerals, such as potassium, magnesium, calcium, and sodium, are found in soaks, they contribute to super hydration of the skin. They also contain antioxidants, to help counterbalance the surfactants, which can be harsh to the skin.

Natural antiseptics, such as tea tree oil, may be used as well as other antiseptic agents. If a soap is used it should be gentle on the skin. It should have more of a a shampoo quality rather than that of a harsh cleaner. Other natural oils are used for their moisturizing and aromatherapy qualities. The soak really sets the stage for the rest of the pedicure. Be sure to purchase the one that meets all the requirements necessary to start the pedicure off on the right foot, so to speak.

**Scrub**

Scrub**s are used to help in the removal and smoothing of the dry, flaky skin and callus, which builds up on the foot. The scrub should be abrasive in order to do the job. However, if it is too abrasive, it will remove the living skin from the hands of the pedicurist who will be using it repetitively. A good scrub contains more softening agents, such as alpha hydroxy acids or oils, to further soften and penetrate the non-living areas of skin that need removal. The scrub will also contain an exfoliating agent, which acts as an abrasive. This helps to mechanically remove non-living tissue from the foot. Sea sand, ground apricot kernels, pumice, quartz crystals, and plastic beads are all exfoliating agents found in pedicure scrubs. Agents such as glycerin are also found in scrubs. These tend to bind with the flakes of tissue and assist in pulling them off the underlying living skin during the exfoliating process. Vitamins, essential aroma oils, and other moisturizers, which help to condition the skin, may also be found in various scrub preparations.

**Massage Preparations**

Massage oils** are used to lubricate, moisturize, and invigorate the skin. They allow the hands of the pedicurist to glide soothingly over the skin during the massage part of the pedicure. They also help to promote a general feeling of relaxation and well-being in the client. A quality massage oil will not absorb into the skin too quickly. The molecular size of the oil determines the rate of absorption. Lanolin and mineral oil are examples of large-molecule oils. Most quality massage oils are a blend of therapeutic oils, which promote skin health. Jojoba oil and vitamin E oil are examples. Aromatherapy oils may also be incorporated for their relaxing and calming effects. Tea tree oil is often included for its antiseptic and antifungal qualities. The pedicurist, like some massage therapists, may want to formulate their own massage oil. Some massage therapy supply stores have base massage oils to which different essential or aromatherapy oils can be added. A number of massage oils can be formulated in this manner to match individual client needs. This will give a customized quality to the pedicure.
Massage lotions have smaller molecules, thus, are fast absorbing. These may be used at the end of the massage to further moisturize and invigorate the skin. Properly formulated, they help retard the growth of callus. Tea tree, vitamin E, jojoba, and other similar oils are also often found in massage lotions.

Add-on Products
These products are used to enhance and expedite the pedicure experience. Highly concentrated callus softeners are offered to help soften and remove the excess callus, which builds up around the heels and over pressure points. A 20 percent alpha hydroxy acid preparation is an example of this. It is applied directly to the callus and allowed to soak in to soften the excess callus buildup. This makes the callus easier to remove with the exfoliates and callous paddles.

Masks composed of mineral clays, sea extracts, hydrating alpha hydroxy acids, aromatherapy oils, and other therapeutic skin softeners, give the feet a special “mud facial” experience. These seem to be excellent products and the clients really enjoy them.

Hot paraffin baths for the feet are an excellent addition to the pedicure. The paraffin bath stimulates circulation and the deep heat helps to reduce inflammation and promote circulation to the affected joints. Aromatherapy oils can also be incorporated into the bath. Clients feel pampered and the hot paraffin wax service adds to the relaxation of the pedicure experience. Do not give this service to clients with impaired circulation, loss of feeling, or other diabetic-related problems. The hot wax may cause burns or skin breakdown in these situations.

Other items necessary for the best-ever pedicure could include

❖ pedicure slippers—Disposable paper or foam slippers are needed for those clients who have not worn open toe shoes.
❖ pedicure sandals—Sandals, with toe separators incorporated in their design, can be purchased by the client and brought in with them every time they have a pedicure.

Pedicure Instruments
The use of quality, professional instruments and equipment by the nail professional is very important. A quality instrument will last the user many years and the proper tools make the job easy. This is particularly true when it comes to working on the foot. Improper, modified instruments used in the performance of foot services, by the nail technician, can easily cause injury to toenails and the soft tissues of the foot. The use of instruments and equipment made specifically for the purpose is, therefore, a major requirement in providing quality, professional foot services to your clients. Instruments and equipment made exclusively for pedicures will allow the nail technician to provide a safer service to clients. In addition, appropriate instruments and equipment will make foot services easier and quicker.
These services, thus, become a much more pleasant experience for the nail technician as well as the client and your client will view you as the professional you are. Additional instruments recommended for providing foot services include the following:

**Toenail Nippers**

These are not the modified enlarged fingernail clippers that are sold as toenail clippers. These are professional instruments made for cutting toenails. **Toenail nippers** come with either curved or straight jaws (Figures 11–27 and 11–28). The jaws of the nipper should come to a fairly fine point. Some come with a blunt point, which makes it very hard to trim out the small corners of a plicatured nail (one that is folded in along the margin). Yes, in certain circumstances a small corner of the nail should be trimmed out! Trimming the corner of a toenail, if done properly, which this nipper allows you to do, does not cause an ingrown toenail.

**Curette**

A **curette** is a small, spoon-shaped instrument that, if carefully used, allows for the removal of debris from the nail margins (Figures 11–29 and 11–30). With experience, the nail technician will find that it becomes an extension of the fingers in feeling for any rough edges or “hooks,” which may have been left after the trimming process. Properly used, the curette is the ideal instrument for cleaning the debris from and feeling along the nail margins. In most clients, you will only have to use it along the margins of the great toenails. Only occasionally is it necessary to clean along the lesser toenail margins. Most curettes are quite sharp on their edges, while others are dull. A double-ended curette, which has a 1.5mm diameter on one end and a 2.5mm diameter on the other, is recommended. Some are made with a small hole making the curette easier to clean after it has been used. The curette, for the purpose of nail care, should not be used to cut out any tissue or debris adherent to the living tissues along the nail margin. The nail technician must, for safety purposes, use a curette that is not sharpened for the purpose of cutting tissue.

**Nail Rasp**

This metal file, or **nail rasp** as it is called in the medical field, is constructed so that it only cuts or files in one direction. The cutting part of the instrument is about 1/8th-inch wide and about 3/4-inch long (Figure 11–31). It is attached to a metal handle in a straight or angled manner. The angled file is recommended because it is easier to use along the nail groove.

This instrument smooths the edges of the nail in the nail groove. It should be placed in the nail groove against the free edge of the nail plate. The file is then gently pulled along the edge of the nail toward the end of the toe. This will smooth any rough edges of the nail plate, which may have been produced during the trimming or curetting procedures. This process...
may be repeated a number of times to make sure there are no rough edges remaining along the nail margin.

The nail rasp, like the curette, is mainly used along the nail margins of the great toenail. The lesser toenails do not usually require filing along their margins. By removing any sharp edges along the nail margin, the possibility of the nail cutting into the soft tissues is reduced. As you become proficient in the use of this file you will find it to be an invaluable and time-saving instrument. Properly used, it will add the professional finishing touch required in the care of toenails.

Diamond Nail File

To file the free edge of the toenails and, in some cases, to thin them, a diamond nail file is an excellent instrument (Figure 11–32). It is metal with diamond dust impregnated into the metal. It comes in coarse, medium, and fine grits. For the toenails, the coarse grit seems to work best. It is constructed in such a manner that it does not fill up with nail debris during use. This file has the same shape as nail files used by the nail technician for fingernail filing. It is thin and flexible and can be used in the same manner as other nail files. Major advantages of this file are that it is easily sanitized and can be kept in disinfectant solutions. It, therefore, can be used safely on many clients. Because the file is metal and the cutting surface is made from diamond dust, it is not easily worn out, making the initial expense extremely cost effective.

Foot File or Paddle

Foot files or paddles are large sanding files made to remove dry, flaky skin and smooth callus from the foot. They come in many different grits and shapes (Figure 11–33). The main disadvantage is that most are not easily disinfected. You should pick a file that is advertised as being “sanitizable” and can be immersed in the disinfectant solution many times without falling apart.

A foot paddle that has a disposable, screen-like, abrasive sanding surface is available. This paddle is easily taken apart so the individual parts can be sanitized and disinfected, and a new abrasive surface can be applied when necessary.

Cuticle Nippers

This same instrument used for hand services, can be used for foot services. Cuticle nippers must be used carefully to avoid cutting the living skin. Only on rare occasions should it be used as its name implies—to cut cuticles. Sharp, close cutting of cuticles on toenails is not recommended for the same reasons discussed previously. This instrument can also be used to remove a small portion of the nail corner in the lesser toes (two through five). Having smaller jaws than the nail nippers described previously, it is easier to use, when necessary, on the smaller toenails.
Files
The electric file is an option when performing a nail service on thick, malformed toenails. Files come in four basic types: hand-held, cable-driven, belt-driven, and micromotor types. The secret of using any of these is to have a light touch and let the drill bit do the work for you. Improper use of the file by an untrained operator will cause injuries to the nail unit. With proper training and careful use, the file becomes an extension of the user’s fingers, just as other instruments used to perform nail services.

Pedicure Equipment
When you enter the work force, your place of employment will undoubtedly provide the pedicure equipment needed to service your client. This section will discuss various large equipment necessary to provide a pedicure service. This can be as simple as a folding chair and a plastic dishpan to the elegant, fully plumbed pedicure unit. As with instruments, quality, well-manufactured, comfortable equipment will be cost effective and also will help to promote your foot care services. If you are uncomfortable and awkward in the provision of the service, this feeling will be transferred to your clients. When you are relaxed, your client can then relax and enjoy the pedicure. Let us discuss equipment that, in general, is not for home use.

Pedicure Carts
These units are basically a stool on wheels (Figure 11–34). The pedicurist straddles and sits on the cart. There are many different designs and manufacturers of these carts. Be sure the height of the cart is such that you will look down on the foot. This will tend to keep your back straighter and you will be more relaxed when giving the service. There is usually a built-in footrest for the client’s feet. There are also drawers and shelves for storage of instruments and pedicure products. Some of these units even include a space for the footbath on the front of the cart. Most units are compact and take up little space.

Water Baths
There are small, portable water baths with vibrators and heaters built into them. They must be manually filled and emptied after each client service. If you use the portable type, be sure to have a comfortable chair or lounge in a private or semi-private area for the client to sit in while receiving the pedicure. Also, the chair should be on a platform to save your back during the service.

A step above the portable water bath is the custom-built pedicure unit, which has a removable foot bath built into the unit (Figures 11–35 and 11–36). These are constructed with both the client and the nail technician in mind. They add to the service and make it much easier for the nail technician to perform the pedicure. There are also pedicure units that have a pedestal design with a removable water bath.
There are portable foot basins available that have built-in whirlpools and can be filled from the sink (Figure 11–37). After the service, they are drained by pumping the water back into the sink drain. They have built-in foot rests and areas for storage of the pedicure materials. They add an extra touch to the service by the gentle massaging action of the whirlpool. These units can also have both a client’s chair and the pedicurist’s chair. These have been specifically designed to compliment the portable foot basin.

The ultimate pedicure foot bath is the fully plumbed pedicure basin chair (Figure 11–38). These units are not portable. The unit is attached to both hot and cold water as well as to a drain. If a floor drain is not available, a pump option can be purchased to pump the water to an available drain. The units may also have a built-in massage feature as well as a warmer in the client chair, which adds to the relaxation of the pedicure. The units are easily sanitized and disinfected.

No matter which water bath unit you have, be sure the seat for yourself fits both you and the unit. If at all possible, look for a stool or chair that is adjustable for height and gives good support. Your back will love you for it.
1. **The soak.** This service starts the procedure. It is important to soften and prepare the skin for what is to follow. It sets the stage, so to speak, for what is to come. The water should be about 104°F. If the client's circulation is compromised, it should not be over 100°F. Place the soaking product into the water according to manufacturer's recommendation. Allow the client to soak for approximately five minutes to sanitize the foot and begin the removal of dry skin and callus. You have time during this part of the service to make sure everything you will need for the rest of the pedicure is in place. You do not want to stop and hunt for something during the pedicure process.

2. **Nail care follows soaking.** Remove one foot from the bath and dry it with a towel. Remove any old nail polish from the toenails. At this point, if needed, apply callus and cuticle softeners to any areas of callus build up on the foot, as well as to the cuticles. This will give the product time to work while you care for the nails.

   Next, the curette is used, as an extension of the fingers, to gently push the soft tissue folds away from the lateral nail walls (Figure 11–39). This allows you to visually inspect the nail so that it can be trimmed without injuring the client. If there is extra build up of debris along the margin, blocking your view of the nail, it should be gently removed with the curette. To use this instrument, place the rounded side of the spoon toward the living skin. This allows the edge of the instrument to fall against the side or edge of the nail. A gentle scooping motion is then used along the nail plate to drag any loose debris or callus out of the nail groove. A gentle pressure against the nail plate and along the free edge of the nail margin is all that is necessary to accomplish the removal of the built-up debris. The pressure of this debris is quite uncomfortable if left in place. You may need to repeat this scooping motion a number of times to adequately remove enough of the loose debris. **Do not** use this instrument to dig into the soft tissues along the nail fold. These tissues are thin and may be easily injured. Any callus or other debris attached to the soft tissue, which is not easily removed in the manner described, should be removed by a podiatrist.

   The nails should now be carefully trimmed using the toenail nippers. The nippers are used like a pair of scissors (Figure 11–40). The nail is trimmed in a number of small cuts to avoid flattening it out and injuring the hyponychium during the process. Place the nipper over the free nail edge and slightly tilt...
Part 3  BASIC PROCEDURES

the top of the nipper back toward the nail plate. This reduces the possibility of cutting the soft tissues of the hyponychium under the free edge (Figure 11–41). Give the nipper a slight squeeze before actually cutting the nail. The reaction of the client to this squeeze will tell you if you are cutting too deep. If you get a reaction, reposition the nipper on the nail and start the process over.

In most instances, you will trim the lesser toenails straight across, and later remove the small sharp corners with the file if they do not turn down into the soft tissue margins. The big toenail is usually the most challenging to trim. The nail margins, in most instances, turn down into the nail groove and, as a result, soft tissue debris, lint, soap, and other material build up occurs. Trim the great toenail just as described for the lesser toes but pay particular attention to the nail margins. Gently slip the point of the nipper under the sharp corner of the margin and trim it off at about a 45-degree angle. Remember not to trim it back too far. If you do, you will leave a “hook” of nail or a rough edge on the nail margin. If you can see the fine point of the nipper extending slightly beyond the edge of the nail before you cut it, you should not get into trouble. If you do leave a “hook” or rough edge it must be removed and smoothed to avoid an infection, which will most likely occur when the sharp point of nail penetrates the soft tissue. If the “hook” is not deep in the margin, gently remove it with the nipper. If it is difficult to remove with the nipper, move on to the next step and remove it with the small nail rasp or curette.

After the nails have been trimmed with the nipper, go back with the curette and gently remove any debris left along the nail margins. This is done, as previously described, by placing the cupped part of the curette against the lateral nail wall and edge of the nail. Gently draw the curette along the nail. This process may have to be repeated a number of times. In most instances this will remove an adequate amount of the non-living debris from the nail margins, thus, relieving the pressure and making the client comfortable. During this process also check the nail margins for rough areas and any “hooks” that may have been left behind after the trimming.

The curette is also used to remove dry cuticle from the top of the nail plate (Figure 11–42). The cuticle at the eponychium should not be pushed back on toenails. Any small break in the seal created by the true cuticle attachment to the nail plate at this level will allow fungal or bacterial infections to occur. To remove the cuticle from the top of the nail, the curette is drawn over the plate away from the eponychium in a sweeping “C” type motion from the nail fold toward the center of the nail plate. This motion is then repeated from the opposite side of the nail plate. You will need to repeat these motions a number of times to remove all of the cuticle debris from the top of the nail plate. Be careful not to injure the eponychium during this process.
The small nail rasp is then used to smooth the edges of the nail margins along the nail grooves (Figure 11-43). The rasp is made for this purpose. It is narrow and will only file the nail in one direction. It can be used to remove, smooth, and round off any sharp points present along these margins. Do not use it as a probe, but gently draw it along the edge of that portion of the nail that you have just trimmed. Small, short strokes with the file, from proximal to distal (back to front), will accomplish the task.

The diamond file should then be used to finally shape and smooth the rest of the nail. If the nail is thick, the file is also used to thin the nail plate. This file is used in the same manner as your regular nail files. Because of its construction, the diamond file is easily sanitizable and can be kept in the disinfectant solution. If you do not have a diamond file you can use the nail files that you use for fingernail services. However, remember that these files are not disinfectable and should be discarded after use. If some of the nails are quite thick you may choose to use the electric drills, discussed previously, to mechanically reduce the thickness. You should only use the drill if you have had hands-on training in its use. This training must be provided by someone who is qualified and knowledgeable about the use of the drill for thinning the toenail. The drill used by a qualified nail technician is a safe, timesaving tool, when it comes to thinning a thick toenail.

After completing the nail service on one foot place it back in the soak and repeat the process described above on the other foot. The entire nail trimming process should take approximately 15 minutes.

3. **Skin Care.** Care of the skin is the next step in the full service pedicure. The skin has been softened by the soaking solution. The thicker areas of dry skin and callus have been softened with the extra strength callus softeners during the nail trimming procedure. The exfoliative scrubbing product is now used to reduce and remove the unwanted skin. One foot is again removed from the bath and the scrub is liberally applied to the foot. Using a massaging motion, the pedicurist scrubs the dry skin off the foot. Use extra friction on the heels and other areas where more callus and dry skin builds up. During this process, the abrasive foot paddle is used to smooth and thin more of the thicker areas of callus. Remember that callus protects the underlying skin from irritation and is there for a purpose. Remove only enough to make the client comfortable. Calluses should be softened and smoothed—not excessively removed. You may need to educate your client about callus formation and the protective function it provides. Also discuss products for home use to help soften and condition calluses. The foot is then rinsed in the bath. Do not forget to clean between the toes. These areas are often missed.
If a mask product is to be used, this is the time to use it. After rinsing and cleaning the foot, apply the mask according to manufacturer’s recommendations. Wrap the foot in a clean towel and place it on the foot rest. The scrubbing and callus smoothing process is then completed on the other foot. The entire process should take approximately 10 minutes. At this point approximately thirty-five minutes have been used for the pedicure. You may wish to allow the client to relax with the mask product (if used) for another five minutes. This will leave twenty minutes for the massage and polish.

The hot wax service may also be added at this point in the pedicure. It may be used in place of the mask or as a separate add-on part of the pedicure. The wax should be applied in accordance with manufacturer’s instructions. By this time in the pedicure, the foot has been scrubbed and cleansed, and is as clean as it will ever be. Organisms, bacterial or fungal, will not live or survive in the hot wax. A plastic bag is placed over the foot and the foot is placed into a terry cloth boot or wrapped in a towel. The process is repeated on the other foot, and then the client should be allowed to relax in silence for five to ten minutes. This allows for the penetration of the heat and oils from the wax into the skin and underlying tissues. It can also be a nice prelude to the massage. Remember this is an add-on service which takes more time and requires special equipment and, therefore, warrants an extra charge.

4. **The massage** is a part of the professional pedicure where the nail technician can excel. This is what the client has been looking forward to. Often, a good massage will make the client come back for the next pedicure. The nail technician who perfects a good massage technique will build a good reputation with pedicure clients. Relaxation is the most important part of the massage. It will give the client a sense of well being and exhilaration. The massage also promotes increased circulation and muscle relaxation within the lower extremities. (See the massage section of this chapter.)

5. **Apply nail polish (optional).** After the massage, if the client desires, nail polish should be applied according to manufacturer’s recommendations. Insert toe separators during this procedure. Remove traces of massage lotion from the toenails with polish remover. Apply base coat, two coats of color, and a topcoat (Figure 11–44). Place feet on a towel to dry.

6. **Post-pedicure procedures.** While you are doing this, recommend take-home products for the client to use between pedicures. Talk about proper foot care and why it is important for healthy feet. Ask what he or she liked or disliked about the pedicure and note it on the client health/record form after the client has gone. Also talk about the next appointment and rebook the client for the next pedicure.
Once the client is gone, sanitize (wash with soap and water) the equipment and instruments that were used for the pedicure and then place the instruments back into the disinfectant solution. If you are doing many pedicures, you may need two sets of instruments in order to allow for proper disinfection times. Spray disinfectant solution on the tub or water bath basin to disinfect all surfaces. You are now ready for your next pedicure client.

**Business Tip**

Service for the Elderly

The elderly also need care and maintenance for their feet on a year-round basis. There is a large segment of the elderly population who cannot reach their feet and need help in their foot care maintenance. It is estimated that 40 million Americans suffer from some form of arthritis. Many of them cannot reach their feet or cannot squeeze the nail nippers. They need proper foot care that a good pedicurist can provide. The nail technician who offers pedicure services for this segment of the population will be doing these individuals a great favor.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>curette</td>
<td>A small, spoon-shaped instrument used for cleaning debris from the edges of nail margins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cuticle nippers</td>
<td>An instrument used for manicures and pedicures to trim dead and flaky skin from around the nail bed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diamond nail file</td>
<td>A metal file with diamond dust, available in different grits, that is the same shape as other nail files. It can be easily sanitized and kept in disinfectant solutions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>effleurage</td>
<td>A light, continuous-stroking massage movement applied with fingers (digital) and palms (palmar) in a slow and rhythmic manner.</td>
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<tr>
<td>foot files (paddles)</td>
<td>Large sanding files made to remove dry, flaky skin and smooth callus from the foot.</td>
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<tr>
<td>friction movement</td>
<td>Firm pressure applied to the bottom of the foot using thumb compression to work from side to side and toward the heel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hand manipulation</td>
<td>The process of skillfully treating, working, or operating with the hands.</td>
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<tr>
<td>massage</td>
<td>A method of manipulation of the body by rubbing, pinching, kneading, and tapping for therapeutic purposes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>massage oils</td>
<td>Blends of therapeutic oils used to lubricate, moisturize, and invigorate the skin during a massage or pedicure.</td>
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<tr>
<td>nail rasp</td>
<td>A metal file with an angled edge that can cut or file in only one direction.</td>
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<tr>
<td>pedicure</td>
<td>Standard service performed by nail technicians that includes care and massage of feet and trimming, shaping, and polishing toenails.</td>
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<tr>
<td>petrissage</td>
<td>A kneading movement in massage performed by lifting, squeezing, and pressing the tissue.</td>
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<tr>
<td>scrubs</td>
<td>Slightly abrasive products containing softening agents or oils to penetrate dry, flaky skin and callus that need to be removed during a pedicure.</td>
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<tr>
<td>soaks</td>
<td>Products containing gentle soaps, moisturizers, and deep penetrating, surface-active ingredients, used in the pedicure bath to soften the skin of the foot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tapotement</td>
<td>A massage movement using a short, quick hacking, slapping, or tapping technique.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toenail nippers</td>
<td>Professional instruments with curved or straight jaws used for cutting toenails.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Name five pedicure supplies.

2. List the seven steps in the pedicure pre-service.

3. Briefly describe the pedicure procedure.

4. Describe the proper technique to use in filing toenails.

5. Describe the proper technique for trimming toenails.

6. List the six steps in the pedicure post-service.

7. Name six foot massage techniques.

8. What is a safety caution for pedicuring?