

Fall Fashion and Beauty Trends May Be Hazardous to Your Health

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(PhysOrg.com) -- As summer winds down and women prepare to trade in their beach ware for fall flair, they should be aware of fashion and beauty trends that may be harmful to their health.

“Women can pay a high price for fashion when it comes to their health,” said Dr. Shazia Khan, co-medical director, Loyola Primary Care Center at Oakbrook Terrace, Loyola University Health System (LUHS).

“Certain beauty and fashion trends can take their toll, if women do not take steps to correct them.”

Among the dangerous fashion and beauty trends that Khan cites are large bags or purses, high-heeled shoes, nickel jewelry and acrylic nails.

Large purses or bags may be to blame for back and [neck pain](#), because they place a strain on the shoulders and neck. Avoid bags that weigh more than 10 pounds. This may be difficult for busy moms who use their purses to carry everything from diapers to dogs to personal digital assistants (PDAs).

Khan recommends that women look for small purses made with light material or backpacks where weight is distributed evenly across the back and shoulders. If women cannot bear to part with oversized bags or purses, Khan suggests incorporating neck, back and shoulder strength-training exercises into their workout routines. They also should regularly rotate the shoulder on which they carry the bag.

Big bags and purses also are a target for harmful bacteria such as *E. coli* and [Staphylococcus aureus](#).

“Women carry and set their purses down everywhere,” Khan said.

“Placing a purse on the ground can attract dangerous bugs, so women should regularly clean or wipe their purses to protect themselves and others.”

While high-heeled shoes have been glamorized by Hollywood starlets for years, continuously strapping on these stylish stilettos can lead to long-term foot, back and ankle problems.

“High heels put unnecessary pressure on the balls of the feet,” said Khan.

“This pressure can lead to ailments such as bunions, plantar fasciitis and foot, back and ankle injuries. High heels also may shorten calf muscles and contribute to knee problems.”

Women who insist on wearing high heels should take heed and limit the time they wear them to prevent long-term damage. Other tips include:

- Alternate the height of heels in order to prevent the Achilles tendon from tightening and shortening;
- Choose a wider, more stable heel;
- Never wear a heel that causes imbalance;
- Choose a shoe that allows ample room for the toes;
- Only wear pointed toes that narrow well past the ball of the foot; and
- Shop for shoes at the end of the day to allow for normal daily swelling.

Hypersensitivity to the nickel in jewelry can cause a chronic itchy, red-skin reaction. This is an allergic response commonly referred to as nickel dermatitis or contact dermatitis. While dermatologists can offer treatments to manage this allergy, these treatments are typically only effective for a short time.

People who are highly sensitive to nickel should have their jewelry lacquered, coated or plated with palladium to protect the direct contact of nickel with the bare skin. Another option is to strictly wear stainless steel, platinum, or gold jewelry.

While some women may turn to acrylics to cover brittle nails that break frequently, this trend does not come without risks. When an acrylic nail is applied to the natural nail surface, minor trauma to the acrylic nail can cause separation of the nail from its nail bed.

“Acrylic nails allow bacteria and fungus to enter the nail area, which can lead to infection,” said Khan. “A better option would be to take care of the original nail through moisturizing and strengthening polish.”

Khan concluded that women can find ways to be stylish without compromising their health.

“These trends can have legitimate, long-term health ramifications,” Khan added. “Using these tips will allow [women](#) to remain fashion forward without jeopardizing their health down the road.”

Provided by Loyola University

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