

Tattoo Aftercare Instructions

Taking proper care of a new tattoo can prevent health problems such as infection.

Your skin has been cleaned and a sterile gauze bandage was applied to cover it.

The purpose of the bandage is to provide a barrier for protection of the newly tattooed skin, which should be treated as an open wound.

Immediate care

Two hours after completion of tattooing

- Wash your hands with soap and warm water; dry with paper towels.
- Remove the bandage.
- Wash gently with cool or lukewarm water, using a mild antibacterial soap.
- Do not use a washcloth— use your clean hands or wet paper towels.
- Any dried blood should be carefully washed off.
- Pat dry with a paper towel. (Don't use a cloth towel.)
- You may want to apply a very thin coat of an antibacterial ointment like Bacitracin or a product like Tattoo Goo or A & D ointment. Gently work into the skin. Re-apply three to four times a day.

If the skin is still oozing, you can cover it with fresh sterile gauze for a while longer.

Later

Continue to keep the tattooed skin clean until it is completely healed, about two weeks.

While your skin is healing, make sure that nothing is rubbing (clothing, belts, etc.) on the area that was tattooed.

You may notice some peeling or scabbing. You can apply a warm, moist, clean washcloth to the area for comfort. Do not scratch or pick any scabs.

Until your skin is completely healed, you will need to cover it with a sterile gauze bandage during any work in a dirty environment.

If you develop any of the following signs of infection— call your physician immediately

- Increased pain, swelling, redness, heat or tenderness around the tattoo site
- Small red bumps or pus-filled boils at the site
- Red streaks extending from the tattooed area
- Fever or feeling generally unwell