

# ADDICTED2TATTOOS

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## Tattoo After Care

From the point that your tattoo is finished and bandaged, your artist is not responsible for any infections or problems you may have with your tattoo if you don't take care of it. A really beautiful tattoo can turn into a disaster if the proper aftercare is not followed.

**DAY 1:** Your new tattoo will be somewhat tender, and will feel like a new sunburn. The care of your tattoo is your responsibility. How you care for it in the first few days determines the way it will look forever. Open flesh is a breeding ground for bacteria and infection. Leave the bandage on for a minimum of 2 hours. Do not remove bandage to let friends see it.

### DO:

- Wash hands thoroughly with antibacterial soap and water. (Dial brand is good.)
- Remove bandage carefully, wet entire bandage to loosen if it is sticking.
- Wash tattoo with warm water and antibacterial soap, lathering with hand. Do not use any cloth or sponge.
- Rinse tattoo well with warm water, until surface of tattoo feels squeaky clean.
- Pad tattoo dry with a clean, disposable paper towel.
- Apply a small amount of lotion or recommended solution to tattoo and work gently into surface of tattoo. Do not rub hard.
- Blot excess lotion with a clean paper towel.
- Tattoo should not be greasy – Less is better!

### DO NOT:

- Re-bandage tattoo ever!
- Use washcloth, loofa, or sponge ever to wash tattoo.
- Do not dry with cloth towels. These harbor bacteria. Use only clean paper towels.
- Touch tattoo with dirty hands. Don't let anyone else either!
- Apply excessive lotion. Tattoo should not look "soggy".
- Use products containing aloe vera, alcohol or cortisone.
- Expose tattoo to natural or artificial sunlight for a minimum of 4 weeks.
- Soak in tub, pool, lake, ocean, river, or bath. Bacteria is present in all of them.

- Pick or scratch tattoo. Use a little lotion for itching. NEVER pick at or scratch your tattoo, even after healing. Do not slap the tattoo – this causes destruction of blood vessels, spreads the ink under the skin, and can damage your skin and tattoo.

**DAYS 2 – 14:** Healing tattoos will peel and flake. Small bits of colored skin will shed. It may not look as "crisp" as the first few days and may appear "hazy". This is completely normal, and will clear up in 2-3 weeks. Continue to wash and dry tattoo twice a day, morning and night, and work in lotion using a very small amount.

Antibiotic ointment (Bacitracin, Neosporin, triple antibiotic) should not be used unless a sign of infection occurs. These may cause allergic reaction, with little red bumps that ruin a tattoo. Problems can occur with prolonged use; and the sun should be avoided at all costs, as some ointments are photosensitive, and a rash can develop if exposed to natural or artificial sunlight.

Always use a high SPF sunscreen on your tattoo before going out in the sun. Ask your tattoo artist what is recommended to use. Never expose your tattoo to artificial tanning lights. Many a fine tattoo have been ruined by sun exposure which makes the tattoo look faded and very old.

Many fine tattoos have been ruined by improper aftercare. Usually clients are following the advice of friends or helpful magazine articles. Unless you have multiple tattoos and know what works best for you, follow the instructions from your tattooist. When using lotion, do not overdo it. A tiny bit goes a long way. Use just enough to cover the tattoo and keep the scab from cracking.

Cleanliness is another important factor in proper tattoo healing. Using a tiny bit of lotion 3 times a day, or after every washing is enough. Do not expose your tattoo to anything harsh, including seawater, chlorinated water and sweat. If you have a "dirty" jog with a lot of dust, make sure to wash your tattoo with water and a little antibacterial soap twice a day. Wear loose sleeves if it is on your arm, loose pants if on leg, or loose shirts if on chest or back. Do not wear tight clothes that rub against the tattoo.

Call us if you have questions or concerns.