

OUTSIDE THE BOX T A T T O O S

Looking After Your New Tattoo

This advice sheet is given as your written reminder of the advised aftercare for your new tattoo.

Getting a new tattoo involves breaking the skin surface so there is always a potential risk for infection to occur afterwards. Your tattoo should be treated as a wound initially and it is important that this advice is followed so that the infection risk can be minimised.

Minimising Infection Risk Guidance Tips:

- Avoid unnecessary touching, scratching, or picking of the new tattoo site to reduce the risk of introducing infection.
- Always wash and dry your hands before and after handling a new tattoo site.
- Your new tattoo will consist of an area of tiny skin breaks, caused by the tattooing needles, so it should be kept covered afterwards for at least an hour using the sterile, non-adherent dressing, applied by your practitioner. This dressing is only intended to get you home without the treated area catching on clothing or being exposed to the air. The dressing will also help to stop any bleeding/fluid oozing but should be removed before it dries on the treated area.
- After removal of that dressing, gently wash the tattoo site with warm tap water and pat dry with a clean hand towel or tissue. Do not rub or skin will become irritated.
- If possible, shower rather than bathe whilst the tattoo is healing so that unnecessary water exposure is prevented.
- Do not use skin products on the treated area that have not been recommended by your operator or are not intended for open wound healing. You may apply moisturising cream 2-3 times a day to assist healing and prevent skin cracking but avoid petroleum-based creams as they may affect the colour of the treated area. There is generally no need to use any other skin creams/antiseptic products and you should not share skin products with others.
- After approximately two weeks, any scabbing should have gone and been replaced with new, intact skin. The area should be completely healed in a further 10-14 days.
- Avoid swimming, sun beds and sunbathing until your new tattoo is fully healed, as direct sunlight/chlorine can interact with tattoo dye pigments causing skin irritation and inflammation.
- Try to wear loose, cotton clothing to minimise rubbing and irritation to a new tattoo site.
- Always keep a new tattoo covered and protected if working in a dirty/dusty/oily environment.
- If you have any problems/queries, contact your practitioner initially. He/she will refer you onto your GP if there are signs of adverse reaction/infection.