

# Tattoo Aftercare Advice

Aftercare & good hygiene are a crucial part of the tattoo process, in particular during the first few days. Please follow the guidelines below for the best results.

## **Day 1:**

Remove the cling-film dressing when you get home (or up to 4 hours after). Run a hot bath, using mild bubble bath, and soak your tattoo for 15-20 mins. It will sting for the first few seconds so once your tattoo is submerged try not to take it out again!

You may get ink and Vaseline on the surface of the water, this is normal. Use a little mild soap to gently wash your tattoo using only your hands, do not scrub! Once clean, either allow to air dry or dab dry with a clean towel. Gently apply a small amount of healing cream – I highly recommend Bepanthen, but other suitable alternatives are Savalon antiseptic cream or Acriflex burns cream.

**TIP:** If you find applying the Bepanthen difficult, gently heat the tube first in warm water to soften it.

Leave alone for the rest of the day, I recommend re-wrapping with cling-film before bed or try not to lie on the area overnight if possible, otherwise it will likely imprint on the bedsheets and probably stick to them too!

Do not touch your tattoo without washing your hands first, it is an open wound, and under no circumstances allow anyone else to touch it.

## **Day 2:**

Shower or wash the area with warm water using a little mild soap. Try to keep harsher shampoos & conditioners away from the tattoo as these can aggravate it.

**DO NOT** submerge the tattoo in water – the area will absorb any dirt and germs in the water into your skin. Use running water only! Once cleaned, air dry or dab dry with a clean towel as before and apply a small amount of cream again.

Ideally you're aiming for enough healing cream to keep any scabbing soft but not so much that the scabbing appears wet.

Do this 2 to 3 times today.

You may wish to re-wrap the area if you're going to work (especially in dirty or dusty environments) or out and about or if your tattoo is in an area where clothing is unavoidably likely to rub (although it's preferable to wear loose fitting clothes to avoid this!).

If you choose to wrap your tattoo, remember to change dressings regularly (every 3-4 hours should be sufficient), washing and reapplying cream whenever you do. Wrap the area before bed.

## **Day 3:**

As per day 2, shower or wash the area with warm water and a little mild soap. Apply cream and re-wrap as necessary, remembering to change dressings regularly. Re-apply cream frequently throughout the day, as necessary.

## **Day 4 onwards:**

**DO NOT PICK OR SCRATCH THE TATTOO!** If you pick the scabs, the tattoo will not heal properly. Let scabs/flaky skin stay on for as long as possible to ensure the colour stays in. You can continue to use your healing cream until it is healed or you may wish to change to a moisturiser - Cocoa Butter or E45 cream are good as they keep the tattoo moist, something neutral.

The area will be sore for a few days after the procedure and there may be some redness, you may also feel some tightening of the skin, this is all normal. Try not to stretch the area as this may cause cracks in the scab which can create scar lines underneath.

If the area becomes extremely tender or raised, try a different cream and/or arrange a time to come see me.

Please send images of the healed tattoo or organise a time to pop back for a check up, so that I can check all has healed as it should.

## **Under NO circumstances:**

1. Use Vaseline or Sudocream. These block out the air and actually draw the ink out of the skin.
2. Expose to UV light, eg sun/sun beds (Once healed use factor 50+ whenever out in the sun. The sun is your tattoo's worst enemy).
3. Scratch or pick whilst healing. If it itches, lightly slap the area or wash off the cream and apply a fresh layer.
4. Go swimming/use a sauna or spa/take a bath after the tattoo day until fully healed. This can take up to 4 weeks.
5. Let clothes rub against the healing tattoo, wear loose clothing if possible.

## **You CAN:**

Go to the gym, **IF** you shower straight after and reapply cream **AND IF YOUR TATTOO IS NOT ON A JOINT AREA** ie. elbow, knee, ankle, neck etc.

## **FEET: DO NOT WEAR SOCKS OR SHOES FOR AT LEAST 2 WEEKS.**

Feet can take several weeks to heal fully, much longer than normal tattoos. Feet need lots of moisturiser (reapply several times a day). Avoid wearing shoes if at all possible, but if you must make sure to wrap your tattoo first and wear soft shoes, leaving them loose if possible.

**HANDS: DO NOT MOVE OR BEND A TATTOOED HAND FOR AT LEAST ONE WEEK.** Moisturise well (3-5 times per day).

**DO NOT WASH DISHES OR PUT YOUR HAND IN "DIRTY" WATER UNTIL THE TATTOO IS COMPLETELY HEALED** (this applies to wrist tattoos too).

**TIME OFF WORK WHILST YOUR HAND HEALS MAY BE NECESSARY.**

Above all, if you have any problems at all please get in contact... Happy healing!

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