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- **Alert: Possible exposure to blood borne pathogens from tattoo/piercing establishment**

FROM:

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Peel Public Health is investigating the possibility that individuals who received tattoo or piercing services from Moonshin Tattoo in Mississauga were exposed to inadequately processed (non-sterile) instruments and/or equipment.

Peel Public Health is working closely with the operator to identify and follow up with clients who may be affected. We are requesting that these clients of Moonshin Tattoo visit a physician for testing for blood borne pathogens.

While the risk of contracting illness from this exposure is low, the use of non-sterile equipment could lead to the transmission of hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).

Laboratory testing for blood borne pathogens

Baseline Testing for hepatitis B, C and HIV should include:

- HbsAg (hepatitis b surface antigen)
- Anti-HBs (hepatitis b surface antibody)
- Anti-HBc (hepatitis b core antibody)
- Anti-HCV (hepatitis c antibody)
- HIV (human immunodeficiency virus)

Repeat (follow-up) Testing: These tests should be repeated at 6 months after the last potential exposure (tattoo/piercing). Repeat testing is not required if the last tattoo/piercing at Moonshin Tattoo was more than 6 months prior to baseline testing.

Lab requisition:

The **outbreak number 2253-2009-032** should be on the laboratory requisition form when ordering tests related to this exposure. All specimens should be submitted through the Ontario Public Health Laboratories.

Counselling

Individuals who received tattooing or body piercing services from Moonshin Tattoo should be reminded to take the following precautions until tests rule out possible infections:

- use a condom during sexual activity
- avoid sharing clippers, razors, toothbrushes, needles and other personal items,
- do not donate blood.

Should patients test positive for any of the blood borne diseases, Peel Public Health will assist with appropriate follow-up including counselling and case management. It is also important to advise patients that it may not be possible to determine if a positive result is related to this exposure.

Vaccine

To minimize the risk associated with future exposures, encourage patients to receive hepatitis B vaccine if they have not already done so.

Hepatitis B vaccine is made available free of charge by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) in certain circumstances. For more information, including:

- eligibility criteria for free Hep B vaccine
- fact sheets on Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV, and
- sample lab requisitions, please see <http://www.peelregion.ca/health/professionals/> under downloads or contact Peel Public Health at (905) 799-7700.

After business hours or on statutory holidays, please ask to be connected to the CD Supervisor on call through our main line. (905-799-7700, dial zero)