



Body and Beauty Art

Tattooing

What is the Health Risk?

You and your clients are at risk of being exposed to HIV, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C or other microorganisms such as bacteria or fungi.

You do not have to see blood or body fluids on equipment or surfaces for an infection to occur.

Before you begin a service:

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with liquid soap under warm running water and then dry with disposable paper towel; see the **Handwashing poster**.
- Set up all equipment and supplies that will be used.
- Cover equipment, such as the clipcord, power supply, tattoo machine, and squirt bottles with a single use plastic wrap, barrier film, or bags.
- Dispense tissues, wipes and jelly prior to starting each service.
- Clean* and then disinfect all disposable ink caps prior to use with an intermediate level disinfectant, such as 70% isopropyl alcohol. Soak the ink caps for 10 minutes in the disinfectant.
- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with liquid soap under warm running water and then dry with disposable paper towel; see the **Handwashing poster**.
- Wear new, single use, disposable gloves.
- Check client's skin; avoid tattooing within 6 inches of skin that is inflamed, infected or has a rash.
- Clean the client's skin with an antiseptic such as, 70% isopropyl alcohol, using a clean disposable swab.
- Apply lubricating gels, creams, ointments, and lotions by squeezing from a tube onto a single use applicator or by obtaining it from a bulk container with a clean wooden spatula. Do not "double dip" into bulk containers as this can cause infections.
- Use single use, disposable razors if skin must be shaved. Immediately discard the razors into an approved puncture resistant sharps container after each client.
- If the area to be tattooed is to be marked, mark the site using the procedure below:
 1. Apply stencil transfer solution to skin with a spray bottle or single use applicator.
 2. Apply the tattoo stencil to the client's skin.
 3. Discard the tattoo stencil.
 4. Allow the marking site to dry.
- Open all sterile packaging in view of the client.



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After you have finished a service:

- Cover the tattoo with an individually packaged dressing intended for covering wounds.
- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with liquid soap under warm running water and then dry with disposable paper towel; see the **Handwashing poster**.
- Provide verbal and written aftercare instructions to client. These instructions should include
 - avoid touching skin or touch skin only with washed hands;
 - avoid using make-up or any cosmetic products in the area that has been worked on;
 - explain how to deal with slight redness, pain or swelling and recommend consulting a medical professional if the problem does not improve within 24 hours.
- Discard the protective covers used on the clipcord, tattoo machine, power supply and squirt bottles.
- Disassemble the tattoo machine.
- Discard the entire needle and needle bar assembly into an approved puncture resistant sharps container. Do not overfill, empty, or touch contents of a sharps container. Do not discard sharps into the municipal garbage.
- Discard single use ink caps and single use tubes/grips.
- Discard any unused tissues, wipes and jelly portions after each client.
- Clean* and then disinfect the tattoo machine chuck/clamp with an intermediate level disinfectant, such as 70% isopropyl alcohol. Soak the parts in the disinfectant for 10 minutes.
- Clean* and then sterilize reusable tattoo machine tubes and grips. Tubes that can be separated from the grip must be taken apart to facilitate cleaning.
- Ensure proper sterilizer monitoring is being conducted prior to placing cleaned, packaged instruments into sterilizer; see the **How to Monitor Your Sterilizer fact sheet**.
- Store the cleaned, packaged and sterile tattoo tubes and grips in a clean, covered container when not in use.
- Clean* and then disinfect work surfaces, with a low level disinfectant, such as 1 tsp of bleach with 10 cups of water allowing it to contact the surface for 10 minutes, after each client.
- Use a high level disinfectant such as, ¼ cup of bleach to 2 ¼ cups of water, if surfaces become contaminated with blood or body fluids; allow the disinfectant to contact the surfaces for 10 minutes.
- If using reusable ink caps, these must be cleaned with soap and water and then sterilized, using an approved sterilizer.

*See the **General and Operational Requirements fact sheet** for detailed cleaning and disinfecting steps.

Records:

- Tattooing is an invasive procedure. Records must be kept of every client who has received an invasive procedure. This record must include
 - date of procedure;
 - full name (first and last) of the tattoo artist ;



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- client name (first and last);
 - complete mailing address ;
 - telephone number;
 - details of the procedure carried out.
- Keep client records and accidental blood and body fluid exposure records on site for a minimum of one year and on file for five years.
 - Keep all records and receipts for any instruments purchased as sterile, pre-packaged.

Additional Requirements:

- Discard gloves if breaks in service have occurred while treating the same client. Wash hands before and after using gloves.
- If a deodorant stick is used for stencil application the entire stick must be discarded after one use. This practice is not recommended for stencil application.
- Soak used tattooing equipment in soapy water if time does not permit immediate cleaning. This does not apply to used, single use disposable equipment.
- Ultrasonic cleaners must be operated with the lid on. Use distilled water or a solution recommended by the ultrasonic's manufacturer. Equipment must be pre-cleaned prior to being placed in the ultrasonic cleaner.
- Post your written back up plan in the sterilization area.
- See the **Sterilization fact sheet** and the **How to Monitor Your Sterilizer fact sheet** if equipment is sterilized onsite.

Source: Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, Infection Prevention and Control Best Practices for Personal Services Settings, January 2009.

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