

ARTISTIC TATTOO INC.
DBA



**Suggested Aftercare Guidelines for Tattoo Body Art Procedures
In Compliance With Suffolk County Sanitary Code Article 14- Body Art Establishment
Regulations**

A tattoo is one of the most dynamic symbols of self expression ever created and it's important to rely on the expert guidance of Tattoo Lou's for the proper care of your life-long treasure.

You were tattooed in a modern studio with sterilized instruments and disposable needles and pigments. The long life of your tattoo depends upon the care *you* give it during the critical first few days and weeks.

- ❖ After your tattoo is complete, we will affix a bandage. In approximately 2-3 hours, you are to first wash your hands thoroughly with mild soap and water, then dry them with clean paper towels- **NO cloth towels**. Then proceed to remove the bandage and wash the tattoo gently. It is best to use an anti-microbial soap. If the gauze sticks to the skin, soak the area with water until the gauze loosens, then remove carefully. While washing, be sure to clean the surface of the tattoo with your hands only. **Do not use a washcloth and do not scrub**. Use luke warm water in order to melt off any blood that has started to dry on the tattoo. Pat the tattoo dry using sterile gauze. **Do not rub**. Apply healing ointment (Bacitracin, A&D, Tattoo Goo, etc) in a thin layer, massaging it into the tattoo. Do not glob the ointment on.
- ❖ At this point it is OK to leave the bandage off, unless you have tight clothing on the area of the tattoo, or you are doing something that may dirty the tattoo, then it is required to cover your tattoo with a **sterile, non-stick bandage**. Please be sure that it is non-stick, as they have a clear plastic coating over the gauze to avoid getting stuck on the tattoo. When you go to bed at night, we recommend bandaging it for the first 3-4 nights, this way the tattoo will not dry out overnight.
- ❖ **Apply the ointment at least 4-6 times daily**. You will need to apply it as many times as it takes to keep it moist; once again in a thin layer, not heavy- you don't want to suffocate the tattoo. If you can, it is best to keep uncovered to get fresh air for at least half the day. Continue with the ointment for no longer than 3-5 days.
- ❖ **After the first 3-5 days you are not to bandage any more.**
- ❖ After 3-5 days, switch to a sanitary, gentle, mild-moisturizing, white skin cream for the following week (Keri Lotion, Lubriderm, Vaseline Intensive Care, etc). Do not use Petroleum Jelly or oily ointments. **Do not use any moisturizing lotions that have perfumes or fragrances in them**. Continue using the skin cream for 5-7 days.
- ❖ Yes, the **tattoo will peel and get itchy**; this is just part of the healing process.

- ❖ If you follow the directions, your tattoo will heal fast and look great. If you let it dry out, you will get scabs on the tattoo. If this happens, just let the scabs fall off naturally. Do not pick or scratch at the scabs while the tattoo is healing; with the scab, you will pick a piece of the tattoo off.
- ❖ **Avoid direct sunlight for 2 weeks.** Be sure to cover the tattoo when in direct sunlight. After healing, it is best to use sun block whenever in extensive sun, as this will prolong the life of your tattoo. **Do not use sun block during the healing process**, only after it has healed.
- ❖ **Avoid soaking the tattoo for at least 10 days-** yes, showering is fine. When showering, wash over the tattoo gently, with a mild soap and warm water. No baths, pools, spas, Jacuzzis, hot tubs, beach water, etc. Especially avoid water with salt or chlorine; these will affect the colors and healing.
- ❖ **Your tattoo area may appear red- this is normal**, the skin is just a little bruised. If it goes on past the 2 week healing period, stop down and let us take a look so we can be sure you are following the instructions properly. If you have extra sensitive skin, it may last a little longer, therefore please be patient.
- ❖ **Your tattoo may be sore** like sunburn during the healing period. This is normal.
- ❖ **Extra care should be taken for tattoos below the knee.** In such instances, you should stay off your feet and keep your feet elevated for a minimum of three days to reduce the possibility of swelling. Not doing so can result in adverse health effects and an adverse appearance to the tattoo. *Important:* This area tends to take longer to heal and may swell a lot due to the constant pressure of just walking around.
- ❖ **If small pimples or a rash forms around your tattoo**, this either means you are allergic to the ointment that you are using on the tattoo or you are using too much ointment. Ninety-nine percent of the time, people use too much ointment and are suffocating the skin. This rash is called 'prickly heat' and is caused by the tiny sweat glands becoming blocked. Prickly heat is itchy and uncomfortable but does not pose a health risk on its own; the bumps and blisters may become infected if they are scratched, therefore **do not scratch**. Stop using the ointment and spray the tattoo area with rubbing alcohol 3 times daily; this will dry it out in a few days. Should prickly heat rashes get worse and fail to resolve within a few weeks, you should seek the advice of a doctor or dermatologist to determine if infection is present. One should also contact a doctor if the rash seems worse and a fever is present. In most cases, prickly heat will resolve within a few weeks without medical attention or intervention.
- ❖ If there is any reason to suspect an infection of the tattoo or its surrounding area, immediately seek medical attention and the attention of Tattoo Lou's.
- ❖ Remember- at this point the tattoo artist's job is complete. **The rest is up to you**, so please take great care in the healing of your tattoo. The better you follow these directions, the better it will look. Some friends may tell you, "No, don't use that; this is what I did..." Stop that conversation right there- this is what we do for a living and we know what works. Remember that Tattoo Lou's has over 50 years experience in the tattoo business; we know how to care for your tattoo.