



TATTOO REMOVAL

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WHAT IS TATTOO REMOVAL?

Tattoo removal can be achieved in a number of ways, ranging from laser treatments, chemical peels, dermabrasion and surgical excision.

How Does Tattoo Removal Work?

Laser Tattoo Removal



Lasers are the most common method of tattoo removal performed today. Tattoos consist of thousands of particles of tattoo ink suspended in the skin. The normal human immune system typically removes small foreign particles from the skin. Tattoo ink particles are too big to be removed by this system and are thus considered permanent. The use of lasers helps to break up these particles into smaller pieces that can be removed by the immune system.

Laser treatments work by targeting the ink particles in the skin with highly concentrated light waves that heat up the ink particles and cause them to fragment into smaller particles that are able to be cleared away by the body's immune system.

Complete removal of a tattoo is usually not accomplished in one laser treatment session. Laser tattoo removal typically requires more than one treatment to reduce the size of the ink particles and make it easier for them to be dispersed by the immune system.

Laser tattoo removal is somewhat painful. Many patients describe it as like having a heavy rubber band snapped against the skin repeatedly. Topical skin numbing medications can be used. Most of the time laser tattoo removal is tolerated very well.

Other methods of tattoo removal are more invasive than laser removal and are therefore less commonly performed today. These methods include dermabrasion, chemical peels and surgical excision of the tattoo.

Dermabrasion Tattoo Removal

Dermabrasion is a surgical method of tattoo removal that involves the use of a medical grinding tool that is used to remove the outer layers of the skin in a controlled manner. The intent is to remove the layers of the skin that contain the ink particles, thereby removing the tattoo.

This procedure is painful and because of this, is typically performed with either a local, regional or even a general anesthetic.

Like laser tattoo removal, a session of dermabrasion will result in an open wound that needs care after the procedure is done. Daily cleaning of the wound with soap

and water, application of an antibiotic ointment and covering of the wound with a dressing are what is usually recommended.

The wounds created as a result of dermabrasion typically take longer to heal than those created by laser tattoo removal. These are likely to take somewhere around 10-14 days to heal.

Also, like laser tattoo removal, more than one session of dermabrasion may be necessary to remove a particular tattoo.

Chemical Peel Tattoo Removal

Trichloroacetic acid (TCA) peels can also be used to remove tattoos. TCA is a mild acid that is applied to the skin to remove the outer layers of the skin, and with them, the tattoo ink.

This type of procedure may be mildly painful, but typically does not require the use of an anesthetic.

Like the other types of tattoo removal, TCA peels will result in an open wound that will need to be cared for after the procedure is completed. Daily cleaning with soap and water, application of an antibiotic ointment and a dressing are all that is necessary. These wounds will typically heal in approximately 5-7 days.

Surgical Excision Tattoo Removal

Tattoos may also be removed by direct surgical excision. This involves simply cutting out the skin that contains the tattoo. This technique is best used for small tattoos and may not be practical for very large tattoos. The skin surrounding the tattoo is then brought together and closed.

This type of tattoo removal will likely require the use of a local, regional or even a general anesthesia depending on the size of the tattoo. A surgical scar will be created by this type of tattoo removal.

Post-procedure bandages should be left in place for 48 hours. Once the bandages are removed and the surgical site should be cleaned daily with soap and water. A dressing may be applied to cover the wound for the first week after surgery.

Tattoo Removal Healing

It will take some time for the skin to heal after tattoo removal. Most side effects are temporary, with the most common reactions being redness, swelling, bruising, scabbing and tenderness. Most of the time these reactions resolve within a week.

What Should I Expect During A Consultation For Tattoo Removal?

- Your tattoo removal goals
- Any medical conditions, drug allergies and medical treatments
- Current medications, vitamins, herbal supplements, alcohol, tobacco and drug use
- Previous surgeries

Your plastic surgeon will also:

- Evaluate your general health status and any pre-existing health conditions or risk factors
- Take photographs
- Discuss your options and recommend a course of treatment
- Discuss likely outcomes of tattoo removal and any risks or potential complications

What Questions Should I Ask My Plastic Surgeon About Tattoo Removal?

Use this checklist as a guide during your **tattoo removal consultation**:

- Am I a good candidate for this procedure?
- What will be expected of me to get the best results?
- Where and how will you perform my procedure?
- How long of a recovery period can I expect, and what kind of help will I need during my recovery?
- What are the risks and complications associated with my procedure?
- How can I expect my tattoo removal procedure to look over time?
- Do you have before-and-after photos I can look at for this procedure and what results are reasonable for me?

What Should I Expect During My Recovery After Tattoo Removal?

You will be given specific instructions that may include:

- How to care for your surgical sites following the procedure
- Medications to apply or to take orally to aid healing and reduce risk of infection
- Specific concerns to look for at the surgical site or in your general health
- When to follow up with your plastic surgeon

What Results Should I Expect After Tattoo Removal?

The **results of tattoo removal** are variable depending on the treatment option used for your case. Some treatment options require several sessions, so results will not be immediate. Each session will show some progress toward the final result, though the number of treatments needed to achieve your final result may vary.

Results for tattoo removal are variable and dependent on factors such as:

- The type of procedure used
- The area of the body the tattoo is located in
- The size of the tattoo
- The complexity of the design of the tattoo
- The color of ink used in the tattoo

For optimal results, it is important that you take proper care of the wounds following your tattoo removal procedure. Be sure to follow your surgeon's post-operative instructions and clean the wound with soap and water daily.

Complete removal of the tattoo is the ultimate goal for any tattoo removal procedures. However, patients should have realistic expectations based on the factors referenced above. Regardless of which treatment is used, it may not be possible to completely remove the entire tattoo. For patients who have their tattoo removed using surgical excision, it's important to understand that there will be a surgical scar left behind.

Before & After Photo



Visual



Animation [Adi care 007](#)

FOR APPOINTMENT

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