



# Tattoos and You

Considerations  
Information  
And  
Warnings

## Healing Styles and Times

To wrap, or not to wrap? Are you using ointment? Are you going to dry-heal? Do you rewrap after showering? What about sleeping? These are the questions... well some of them. The path of healing is as varied as the styles of artists in the world. Some will suggest regular lotions or salves, while others prefer a tattoo specific product. There are artists that use an air permeable bandage that seal fluids in or out yet allow oxygen to pass through to help heal the wound. One thing most of us can agree on is to avoid thick oily ointments like A&D or Neosporin. These clog the pores, harvest germs and debris, and stop oxygen from accessing the healing tattoo. They can even leach ink out of the tattoo.

Your artist will discuss with you the preferred way they want you to approach aftercare. Their specific style of tattooing may have a more symbiotic relationship with a given aftercare method. Let's go into a little more detail about how tattoos heal and how different methods influence this process. On average tattoos take 3-5 weeks to initially heal. Touch-ups are needed on occasion and your artist will discuss their individual process with you. Some factors that can affect our healing times are medical issues or medicines, stress, poor nutrition, or lack of sleep, and immune or hormonal shifts. We all only have one immune system and it's busy keeping us alive. Tattoos are not a top priority when anything else is out of balance.

**Dry Healing** is the process of letting a tattoo heal in the same manner you would heal something like a skinned knee. You leave it alone other than washing and keeping it clean. Dry healing is a natural simple way to heal your tattoo by letting the tissues develop and regenerate with little to no external influence. You may see thicker layers of scabbing or dry skin with this method. If something feels concerning please reach out to your artist.

**Moisturizing** adds lotions, balms, or salves into the equation. Some folks' bodies will draw moisture in from surrounding cells to help with the healing. Products that restore the fluid balance can make the mitosis (cell regeneration) process more efficient. This also works to prevent the scabs and dry skin from hardening, cracking, and creating more damage. Moisturizing should be done in moderation. Extremely thin layers applied with clean hands to a clean wound is all that is needed. Thick layers of any product will create issues like zits, ingrown hairs, rashes, and sores. If this were to happen contact your artist for more information. Moisturizing your tattoo may or may not expedite the healing process of your new tattoo.

**Barrier Wraps** act as a second layer of skin. Our skin is a barrier against the dangers of the outside world. When we get tattoos, it disrupts the effectiveness of the function. These films (originally designed to help burn victims heal,) "replace" the damaged top layer of tissue allowing oxygen to pass through yet prevents foreign contaminants into the wound. You may notice a pocket of blood, ink, and lymph secretion building under the wrap. Affectionately referred to as "the forbidden soy sauce," is a disturbing byproduct but is not dangerous. It is best to leave it alone and avoid popping or draining the bubble. A break in the surface can expose your wound while simultaneously preventing you from being able to wash it effectively. Sticky bandages typically last 3-5 days. After this window most of the tattoo is healed. Make sure to talk to your artist if you have latex or band aid adhesive allergies.

## **Cleanliness and Asepsis**

Throughout the history of tattooing many things have changed and evolved. One thing that has remained constant is that hygiene, asepsis, and sterility have continued to evolve. While not everyone out there is as on-top of these advancements you can trust that we are. To our knowledge, Caspian's artists were some of the first to go completely disposable. We never reuse inks, needles, tubes, gloves, or other consumables that encounter clients.

We use aggressive surface disinfectants to rapidly eliminate microorganisms. Additionally, barriers are used to minimize or eliminate cross contamination. We build protocols to facilitate the time and focus to clean efficiently. Your safety is of paramount importance to us. Each of our needles, tubes, and cartridges are sent to us individually wrapped and sterilized with Ethylene Oxide gas. Due to the nature of plastics used in disposable tattoo products, steam sterilization is not an option. EO gas is a highly effective method and is not harmful at all to the end user.

While not a common occurrence, when steel tubes are used, our standards are strict and exacting. Soaking the tubes in an enzymatic detergent breaks down proteins in the blood and fluids from the previous client. The following scrub down with a mild abrasive removes larger particulates. An ultrasonic bath is the penultimate step in the process. Ultrasonic vibrations cause what's known as cavitation. In short exploding any remaining organic material that could harbor harmful pockets of microbes. Finally a trip into the autoclave raises the temperature to 270 degrees and a crushing 30psi of atmospheric pressure rendering any remaining biologic material completely dead and inert.

## **Choice and Responsibility**

Two significant aspects of your new tattoo are the choices in the design, placement, and style. Your responsibility to your artist and your future self is approaching the conversation with clarity and understanding. Ask questions with an open mind. A lot of the things you see online are not examples of a sound choice. Your artist is represented in your tattoo and they will be clear about limitations because they know how a bad tattoo will reflect back on them. Trust me when I tell you all these folks want to do is give you a killer tattoo that both of y'all will be stoked on for years to come.

Spelling is completely your responsibility. We'll do our best for sure, but understand when you look at your stencil you have the final say on the spelling. You write it out. You Google it. You verify it.

Location is your choice, but if you choose an area that may be problematic or all together ill-advised your artist will bring the risks to your attention. In some instances, an artist might even decline the service due to their own discomfort with the tissue's location or limitations. However, it's likely these issues will be resolved before your actual appointment.

There are physical limits to tattoos size, colors, and other factors. Communicate clearly about your desires and listen to the feedback from your artist. Again, they want you to have a good tattoo and some of the designs that come in are simply not feasible. It's not a matter of being lazy or hard to work with. Rather it is years of experience and knowledge that prevent an artist from doing the all-white micro fine line floral anklet you were hoping for. We're just as disappointed as you!