

SOME THINGS TO REMEMBER

If you do get a tattoo, make sure it is done by a professional, not by yourself or a friend. Make sure the tattoo is done in a clean environment using sterile equipment. Some cities have by-laws about how a tattoo studio is to be set up and procedures that must be followed. The tattoo studio must then post their permit in a place where you can see it easily. Look for this posting. Know what the procedures and laws are in your community.

The tattoo artist should use brand new, sterile needles each time.

Don't be afraid to ask the tattoo artist lots of questions.

Make sure you are given written instructions telling you what you need to do to look after your tattoo.

If you are not sure about something that you see or hear, don't be afraid to find a different tattoo artist. It's your body.

WHO CAN I TALK TO IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

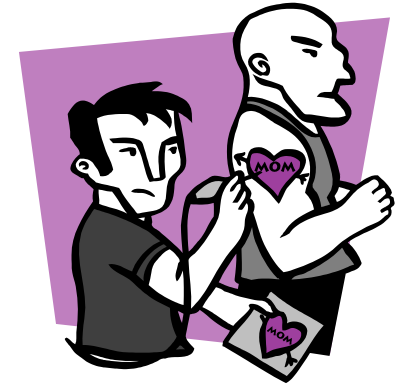
You can talk to your transplant doctor, nurse or any team member!

Removing a tattoo is more complicated and more expensive than getting a tattoo. Some removal methods leave visible scars.

This content is reviewed periodically and is subject to change as new health information becomes available.

The information is intended to inform and educate and is not a replacement for medical evaluation, advice, diagnosis or treatment by a healthcare professional.

SO YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT GETTING A TATTOO?



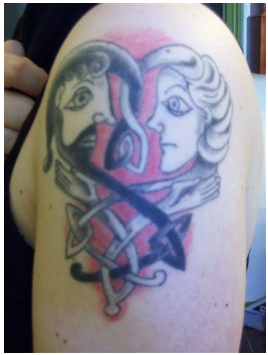
Information for teens with an organ transplant



Tattoos are not recommended as they break the skin barrier and can lead to infection. If you are still thinking about getting a tattoo, please read this information carefully.

WHAT IS A TATTOO?

A tattoo is a permanent way of marking the skin with coloured dye. Needles are used to pierce or put a small hole into the skin and insert a special dye.



One needle or several may be used, depending on the artistic effect you are looking for. The needle puncture (hole) in your skin may be from 1 to 4 mm deep.

BEFORE YOU GET A TATTOO...

Know your risks.

Infection - dirty needles can pass **blood** infections like hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV from one person to another. That is why re-using needles is illegal.

If you are taking medications that lower your immune system, you are

at greater risk of other infections. Your skin protects you from germs entering your body. A break in the skin or a dirty needle going into the skin allows germs to enter the body, which might cause a **skin** infection.

Allergies - some people have serious allergic reactions to the ink used in tattooing.

Scarring - sometimes tattoos can leave scars.

MRI Complications - some people have swelling or a burning feeling in their tattoo when they have a special test called an MRI (a machine that takes pictures of places inside your body). This is rare and doesn't last long. If you need an MRI, make sure you tell the staff at the MRI clinic that you have a tattoo, so they can take precautions.

If you get a tattoo...

The finished tattoo should initially be covered with a clean non-stick bandage.

The tattoo artist should give you verbal **and** written instructions on caring for your tattoo.

Always wash your hands with soap and water before cleaning the tattoo and the skin around it.

Avoid touching your tattoo except to clean it.

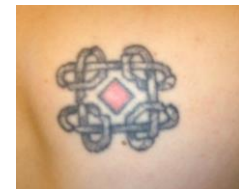
Call your family doctor or pediatrician if you think your tattoo may be infected. Signs of infection are things like increased redness, swelling, painful to touch and/or discharge/pus coming from the area.

ASK YOURSELF...

"Is this my choice?" Don't let anyone pressure you into getting a tattoo.

"Can I promise to take the time I need to look after my tattoo so it heals properly and doesn't get infected?"

"Do I know anyone who has had a tattoo for a long time (more than 5 years)? Is that person still happy with their tattoo?"



"Will my tattoo be in an obvious spot that might affect future job opportunities?"