



Tattooing– Infection Prevention and Control Practices

Before Starting the Tattoo

- Record the client's name, address, telephone number, date and type of procedure, and the name of the tattoo artist.
- Keep client, accidental exposure and pre-packaged sterile items records for at least three years with a minimum of one year (365 days) on site.
- Record manufacturer, lot number and expiry date for pre-packaged sterile items including needles.
- Cover all light fixtures, spray bottles and parts of the tattoo machine that cannot be cleaned and disinfected. Use single-use plastic wrap. New plastic wrap must be used for each client.
- Clean and disinfect headrests, worktables, and chairs between clients. Use a low-level disinfectant.
- Provide the client with information about the procedure and any associated risks.
- Inspect the area of the skin that will be tattooed for inflammation or a rash. Avoid tattooing within 6 inches of skin that is red, swollen, infected or with a rash.
- Clean your hands before putting on single-use disposable gloves and after removing gloves.
- Use a new pair of single-use disposable gloves for each client.
- Clean the area of the skin with an approved antiseptic such as 70% isopropyl alcohol. Use a disposable swab.
- Deodorant sticks are not recommended for applying stencils.
- Dispense any creams, lotions, ointments, and ink in a way that prevents contamination. – use a pump or disposable ink cap stick.
- If a razor is required to shave the area, it must be sterile and discarded immediately after use, Discard the razor into an approved sharps container. Sharps containers cannot be discarded with municipal garbage.
- Clean the client's hands or feet depending on the service.

Preparing Your Own Needles

- Toronto Public Health recommends using needles and needle bars that have been purchased pre-packaged, sterile and ready for use. Keep records for these items for at

least three years with a minimum of one year (365 days) on site. on-site for one year and on file for five years.

- If the needles are prepared by the artist, the needles must be purchased pre-packaged and sterile. The needle and needle bar must then be cleaned in an ultrasonic cleaner, re-packaged and sterilized before use. The date the item was sterilized must be written on the package.
- Remove prepackaged sterile instruments and needles from their packaging in front of the clients.
- Discard needles and needle bars into an approved sharps container immediately after use. Sharps containers cannot be discarded with municipal garbage.

Sterilizing Equipment in a Sterilizer

- Any item being sterilized must first be cleaned. An ultrasonic cleaner can be used to clean instruments before sterilization.
- All items must be packaged before being sterilized.
- Autoclaves Sterilizers must be monitored to ensure they are working properly.
- There are three types of monitoring that are required; biological, chemical and physical.
- For more information see the [Sterilization – Infection Prevention and Control webpage](#).

Failed Spore Tests

- Do not use any equipment from the failed load and any items sterilized after the last passed spore test.
- You can use any equipment sterilized during the time when the autoclave passed the spore test or use purchased pre-packaged sterile items.
- Report the [failed spore test](#) to Toronto Public Health.

Failed Chemical Indicator (Did Not Change Colour)

- Reprocess items immediately using another internal chemical indicator (type 4) and an external chemical indicator if the internal indicator is not visible in the package.
- If the chemical indicator fails again:
 - Stop using items from the failed indicator tests and
 - Conduct a spore test right away.
- Use items reprocessed from the last passed spore test or use purchased, pre-packaged, sterile items until you get the spore test results.

Ink Caps and Ink

- Toronto Public Health recommends using disposable ink caps. Clean and disinfect ink caps before using. Use an intermediate-level disinfectant such as 70% isopropyl alcohol.
- Discard disposable ink caps after each client. Discard any leftover ink. Use a new disposable ink cap, if additional ink is required during the procedure.
- Foam inserts are not allowed to be used.
- Ring ink caps are not recommended due to the occupational risk.
- Sterilize reusable ink caps between clients.
- If an ink cap holder is used, it must be cleaned and disinfected between clients. Use using a high-level disinfectant.
- Sterile water should be used if diluting ink. Do not use tap water to dilute ink.

Aftercare Instructions

Every client should be told and receive written information on how to care for their skin after their tattoo and what they should do if their skin becomes red, swollen or uncomfortable.

Questions/inquiries? Please contact BodySafe at BodySafe@toronto.ca or 416-338-BODY(2639).