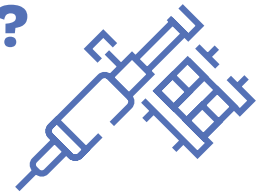


# Are you ready for life with a tattoo?



Before you get tattooed, it is a good idea to read the following information about what you should keep in mind when getting a tattoo.

## Is it dangerous to get a tattoo?

Most people have no adverse reactions to being tattooed. However, there are some risks in connection with getting a tattoo.

You run the risk of a bacterial infection when you get tattooed. Infection symptoms include the skin around the tattoo becoming red, warm to the touch, swollen and painful – and it may also secrete fluids. Many people experience itching and swelling in the tattooed skin when it is exposed to sunlight. Others experience constant itching and swelling of the skin.

In rare cases, nickel and preservatives in the tattoo ink may trigger allergic reactions. Red ink and shades of red (pink, orange and purple) may also trigger allergic reactions, with symptoms including constant swelling, itching, eczema, pain and burning sensations. Over time, black ink can cause small lumps in the tattoo – especially if the tattoo artist has used too much ink.

In rare cases, it can trigger the disease sarcoidosis, which attacks the lungs, eyes and joints.

In very rare cases, infection with hepatitis or HIV may occur.

Cosmetic tattoos, i.e. tattoos of eyebrows, scalp, eyelids, and lips, may induce herpes if you have previously had cold sores and may cause allergic reactions.

## Beware of getting a tattoo if...

You have allergies, are currently experiencing an outbreak of psoriasis or eczema; develop thick scars after wounds; have diabetes, epilepsy, sarcoidosis, nickel allergy, a weakened immune system, chronic infection, or a bleeding disorder; or if you are being treated with blood thinning medicine.

## Consider talking to your doctor before getting a tattoo.

Avoid getting tattoos on top of birthmarks and moles, which makes it difficult to monitor potential changes.

## Immediately after getting a tattoo

A tattoo usually takes 3-4 weeks to heal. To reduce the risk of infection, you should follow the tattoo artist's advice on caring for the tattoo.

Your tattooed skin will always be swollen for a few hours to a few days after you have been tattooed. The tattoo will itch as it heals – this is normal. Avoid sunbathing of the tattooed skin until the tattoo has healed.

If you get a cosmetic tattoo, it is recommended that you do not use any type of makeup or other cosmetics until the cosmetic tattoo has healed.

## Remember sunscreen

It is a good idea to use a high SPF sunscreen on your tattoo.

## Did you know...?

- You must be at least 18 years old to get a tattoo.
- It is not permitted to tattoo the head, neck or hands.
- If the tattoo artist has completed special training it is allowed to perform cosmetic tattoos of eyebrows, scalp, eyelids, and lips, but not the rest of the face.
- All tattoo shops must be registered with the Danish Safety Technology Authority. This is your assurance that inspections are conducted to ensure proper hygiene, etc.

**Danish Patient Safety Authority**

E-mail: [stps@stps.dk](mailto:stps@stps.dk)  
Phone: +45 7228 6600

[www.stps.dk](http://www.stps.dk)

**March 2024**

## Contact your doctor if...

- You experience increasing redness, swelling, pain, skin that is warm to the touch, itching, or fluid in the new tattoo. You develop yellow pus, scabs or abscesses in the tattoo.
- Your tattooed skin or the surrounding skin continues to be red.
- You develop a red rash or blisters.
- Your skin thickens or begins to flake in one of the tattoo colours. This is most often seen in shades of red.
- You develop small lumps in the tattoo. This is most common in black areas of the tattoo.
- You experience fatigue, upset stomach, or jaundice in the weeks or months after being tattooed.

**It is also a good idea to contact the tattoo artist if you experience problems with your tattoo.**

## NOTE!

**You must seek urgent medical attention if you develop a high fever and general feeling of illness in your body, as this may be a sign of blood poisoning.**

