



Tattoo Aftercare Tips & Instructions

There are many different ideas and theories as to what is the best method of aftercare for your tattoo. Everyone's biology is different, and what works well for someone might not be the same for another.

Below are some tips and suggestions that have worked for me and my clients.

General tattoo healing tips

- ✓ Keep the saran wrap on for 2 to 3 hours after you get inked.
- ✓ When you take the saran wrap off, rinse your tattoo with clean water and pat dry it with a towel or air dry. Try to wash off your new piece every 4 hours or so the first couple of days using lukewarm water. In addition to water, you can use non-scented anti-bacterial soap (e.g., Dial antibacterial hand soap) after the first day or so. The cleaner you keep your new tattoo, the faster and better it will heal.
- ✓ For about 3 to 5 days, put a *very thin layer* of A&D ointment or Aquaphor on your new ink about 2 to 3 times a day as needed. Do *NOT* use any medicated ointment on your new tattoo (e.g., Neosporin) or petroleum jelly (e.g., Vaseline)—doing so could cause an allergic reaction.
- ✓ When you are done applying the A&D ointment or Aquaphor on your tattoo (after about 5 days), you can use an intensive care *fragrance-free* dry skin lotion (e.g., Lubriderm) on your new tattoo to help with the itching and healing.
- ✓ During the first few days, depending on where your tattoo is located, the tattoo may be prone to swelling. Using a bag of ice, elevating the tattooed area, and taking ibuprofen can help reduce the swelling.
- ✓ For the next two weeks, keep washing the tattoo and use the lotion as needed. Keep the skin moisturized to prevent cracking and bleeding. After a few weeks, the skin will stop shedding and your new tattoo will be there for good!
- ✓ It takes 3 weeks to a month for a tattoo to heal correctly.

Additional tips for larger sessions

- ✓ Larger sessions may involve different methods for healing, although the same principles apply with keeping the area clean and using ointment. Larger sessions may require re-applying saran wrap to the tattooed area for the first couple of days. Please [contact](#) me with any questions.

What should I avoid?

Keep out of the sun

- It's important to stay out of the sun for a few weeks after you get a tattoo. And, after your ink is healed, be sure to put on sunscreen with a high enough SPF to protect your new piece, and your skin in general.

Avoid submerging the tattoo, no swimming, and stay out of the ocean

- For a few weeks after you get tattooed, make sure you stay out of swimming pools and the ocean. Chlorine and salt water is not good when you are letting your new tattoo heal. And, no baths and Jacuzzi's—stick to showers.

No picking!

- After a few days, your new tattoo will start to shed skin and itch. Do *NOT* pick or scratch at your tattoo! If you must touch it, lightly pat it. There may be a couple scabs on your tattoo that take longer to come off than others—some taking up to a few weeks to come off. If this is the case, just let the scabs fall off on their own and be mindful not to pull them off prematurely, as this could result in loss of ink.

Anything else?

- ✓ Don't wear tight clothing around your new piece. Try not to work out and sweat too much on the new ink while it's healing. And, be aware that sometimes the colors can ooze after first getting inked, which could get on your clothes. So, don't wear your favorite white shirt when going to get a back piece :)
- ✓ While healing, it's important to let your piece breathe. So, try to keep your new tattoo uncovered when you can and don't sleep on it. For example, wear shorts if you have a leg piece, and keep your leg out of the covers at night. If any clothing sticks to your piece, we the area of clothing that is stuck to unstick it.
- ✓ Do not suffocate your new piece—let it air out, especially the first couple of days and when you go to sleep. The tattoo will go into a light leaking, scabbing, and peeling process during healing, similar to a bad sunburn. Expect there to be some color that will shed off with your skin after a couple of days—don't worry, this is completely normal.

If you experience any problems with your new ink healing, please [contact me](#).