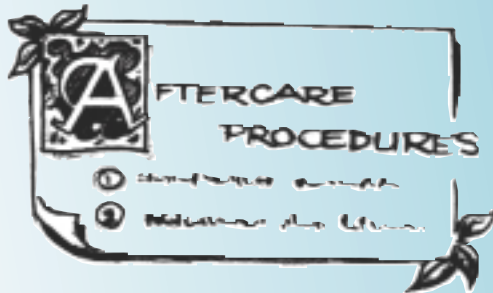


Safer Tattooing

The professional tattoo artist you have chosen will:

- Use new sterile needles every time.
- Use special tattooing ink (other inks such as pen inks or photocopying inks are toxic and must not be used). Be aware that some people may be sensitive to certain colour dyes.
- Use new disposable ink caps which are small containers of tattooing ink. You should ask if they throw them away after each use.
- Clean the areas to be tattooed with soap and water and then with a skin antiseptic.
- Use a new disposable razor if shaving is needed.
- Make sure you leave with written aftercare instructions.



Infection can ruin your new artwork!

- Make sure a sterile non-stick bandage covers your tattoo when you leave.
- Tattoos can take up to six weeks to heal.

- Follow the aftercare instructions.
- If you must touch your tattoo, WASH YOUR HANDS FIRST.
- If the tattooed area becomes red, swollen, tender or if pus develops, you may have an infection. See your doctor immediately.

Resources

For more information about safe tattooing and body piercing call

- **Health Line Peel** •
905-799-7700
and ask for
- **Sexual Health Information** •



Artwork courtesy of Rick Kemp

Tattooing photos courtesy of Art Addictions

Piercing photos courtesy of Art Addictions

Peel Health...Your Partner in
Building a Healthier Community

Tattooing



and

Piercing



Make it Safe

 **Region of Peel**
Working for you

Shopping Tips

For safe tattooing or body piercing, take the time to find a professional artist.

Why?

- You want a good experience and quality work that is an expression of you.
- A professional artist wants your whole experience to be positive.



- You don't want to be put at risk for infections. When the skin is pierced (as in tattooing and piercing), viruses and germs can easily get into the body. HIV, hepatitis and other infections are risks of tattooing and piercing that can be avoided.
- Professional artists will be just as concerned as you are about preventing infections and producing good art work.

How would I know if I've found a professional artist?

Professional artists will:

- Be willing to show you and talk about examples of their work.



- Be willing to answer all of your questions (you have the right to ask them).
- Be willing to explain the cost of their work (cheaper doesn't always mean better - you get what you pay for).
- Explain how they clean and sterilize their equipment. Blood and other body fluids from a previous customer can remain on equipment and work surfaces. These should be carefully cleaned and equipment sterilized in an autoclave (a steam machine).
- Have a clean, sanitary, well-lit working environment. All surfaces such as counter and table tops should be made of hard material that is easily cleaned with a disinfectant such as household bleach.
- Use new piercing or tattooing needles for each customer. Needles that have been used on other customers may be contaminated with HIV and hepatitis viruses. Also, used needles can have barbs, hooks, rough bumps or germs that can tear your skin or cause infection.
- Wash their hands and use new latex gloves during the whole procedure.
- Not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs. They will make sure you aren't either.

If the artist can't or won't answer all of your questions, don't be intimidated. Leave and find a different artist. It's your body, your money and your choice.



Safer Piercing

What You Should Know

- The best place to pierce is a meaty skin area. Avoid the neck, joints, arteries and tendons.
- Facial piercing is tricky. Talk to your artist about your options.
- Inform the artist if you have a metal allergy.
- There is special jewellery designed for piercing. Find it and use it.
- Sterile surgical, single-use disposable piercing needles must be used for body piercing (see section on Shopping Tips). Ear piercing guns should not be used for anything other than ear lobes.
- The artist must first clean the area to be pierced with soap and water and then with a skin antiseptic such as alcohol.
- Don't leave without written aftercare instructions.

