

Table 6: Detailed Infection Prevention and Control Procedures for Tattooing and Micropigmentation

Adapted from *Infection Prevention and Control Practices for Personal Services: Tattooing, Ear/Body piercing, and Electrolysis.* Health Canada, July 1999.

		Equipment / Supplies	Use During Tattooing	Procedures for Infection Prevention
1.	Skin Preparation	Spray bottle with a solution of soap and water	The skin area to be shaved is sprayed with the solution for lubrication purposes.	The spray bottle shall be covered with a single-use plastic sheath (e.g. plastic bag). This plastic shall be discarded after each client service. At the end of each day, or when soiled, the spray bottle shall be cleaned then disinfected with a low-level disinfectant. The solution should not be "topped up" with more solution. The inside of the bottle should be washed and dried prior to adding new solution.
		Single use disposable razor	The skin is shaved prior to tattoo placement.	Razors are to be discarded in an approved sharps container immediately after use on each client.
		Topical anesthetic (optional)	A topical anesthetic may be used to decrease client discomfort during the procedure.	Whenever a topical anesthetic is used on a client site, it must be applied with a clean, single-use, disposable swab. The anesthetic should be applied on the site before the skin is cleansed with an antiseptic.
		> skin antiseptic	Antiseptic is used to cleanse the skin prior to tattooing.	The skin antiseptic is to be applied with a clean swab using a circular motion. If alcohol is used, it should be stored in a pump pack that is used to moisten the cotton balls. Alternatively, the swab may be moistened by pouring the antiseptic from the original container into a disposable paper cup. The disposable cup is to be discarded in the waster bin after use. Skin antiseptics should not be sprayed onto client's skin. For cosmetic tattooing of areas around the eye, (e.g. eyeliner), potable water should be used and an antiseptic should be avoided.

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2.	Stencil and image transferring solution	Lotion or spray bottle with solution as aboveSkin Antiseptic	Lotion or other solution moistens the skin prior to application of the stencil.	Lotion should be applied in the same way as kin antiseptics OR with spray bottle. Deodorant sticks are <i>not</i> recommended instead of lotion since they can become contaminated with microorganisms and are usually not discarded after each client.
		 Single-use stencil transfers or plastic stencils 	Stencils are used to outline the design of the tattoo on the skin.	Single-use stencils shall be discarded after use.
3.	Lubricating Product	E.g. gel or petroleum jelly	The lubricating product is place don the skin with a single-use spatula or a piece of clean gauze prior to tattooing.	The lubricating product shall be removed from the bulk container with a single-use wooden spatula or dispensed from a pump container onto a single-use applicator. Any remaining product must be discarded and never used on another client. Alternatively, a single-use preparation may be used.
4.	Tattoo dyes	Pigment/inkPigment/ink caps/cups	Sterile needles, which have been dipped into pigments, pierce the tissue below the skin to create the permanent marks forming the tattoo. Each unique pigment is placed in an individual cap/cup into which the tattoo needles are dipped.	Currently, commercially prepared pigments are not sterile. Contamination of pigment bulk containers should be avoided by placing pigment into smaller, clean containers, (e.g. plastic squeeze bottles). Pigments to be dispensed in a manner that prevents contamination.
		Pigment/ink holding tray	Trays are sometimes used to hold the pigment/ink caps.	The pigment/ink cap trays shall be cleaned and high-level disinfected as a minimum after use for each client or preferably are to be discarded.
		Disposable cup with tap water	Tap water is used to rinse pigment/ink from the needles prior to using another colour.	Water should be poured into the sink at the completion of the procedure. Discard disposable single-use cups into a plastic lined waste bin.
5.	Cleaning the skin during tattooing / micropigment-tation	 Spray bottle containing a solution of soap and water as in #1 	The skin is cleaned to enable the practitioner to see it clearly and to avoid the mixing of colours.	Care should be taken to avoid contamination of the soap solution when it is being prepared and during use.
		 Single-use disposable paper towels 	Single-use disposable paper towels are used to wipe the treated area during the procedure.	The spray bottle shall be covered and cleaned then disinfected as in #1. All paper towels shall be discarded into a plastic lined water bin, including any unused paper towel in the immediate work area.

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6.	Tattoo machine	 Motor frame Clipcord chuck or clamp 	The motor frame is connected to an electrical source by the clipcord. The clipcord may be touched multiple times during tattooing, especially if more than one machine is used on the client. The chuck/clamp attaches the needle bar/tube to the motor frame.	The clipcord and the motor frame shall be covered with a disposable plastic sheath. The plastic sheath shall be discarded after each client service. The clipcord and motor frame shall be cleaned and then disinfected with a low-level disinfectant after each use. Alternatively, surfaces may be covered with single-use plastic that is discarded and changed between each client. After each client service the clamp shall be cleaned then disinfected with an intermediate-level disinfectant.
		> Elastic bands	The elastic bands apply pressure on the needle bar so that the needles can rest in the bottom of the tube tip.	Elastic bands are single-use and disposable.
7.	Instruments	Needles e.g. stainless steel needle bars	Needles are soldered onto needle bars. The needles place pigments in tissue under the skin.	Any flux residue produced by soldering should be removed with a solution of baking soda and water or an alternate appropriate chemical prior to cleaning. New needles and the needle bar shall be cleaned, in an ultrasonic cleaner, rinsed, air dried, then sterilized or packaged for sterilization. Needles must not be tested on the practitioner's skin. Needles that have been cleaned in the ultrasonic cleaner between colours are not sterile. Used needle bar combination shall not be disassembled. Instead the intact needle bar unit should be discarded.
		 Metal tube and grip (as one unit or as separate parts) 	The metal tube and grip assembly surrounds the needle and needle bar and is attached to the motor frame.	Metal tubes and grip shall be cleaned and sterilized for each client use. Because the grip is grooved metal, a brush should be used during cleaning. Tubes that can be disassembled must be taken apart to facilitate cleaning.

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8.	Other	>	Metal container with lid	The container for used	The metal container shall be
	equipment		or puncture resistant container	instruments is kept in an area designated for dirty items/instruments, and is partially filled with water, or water and detergent to prevent drying of body proteins on soiled instruments before cleaning.	cleaned and disinfected with a low-level disinfectant daily.
		A	Ultrasonic cleaner	The ultrasonic cleaner contains detergent and water to clean reusable instruments after use on a client prior to sterilization. The ultrasonic cleaner is also used to clean the needles and needle bar after the new unused needles have been soldered onto the needle bar. Cover the device with a lid when in use.	The ultrasonic cleaner shall be emptied and cleaned daily with detergent and water. The ultrasonic cleaner cannot be used to disinfect or sterilize instruments. Needles cleaned in this manner, (i.e. critical items), shall not be reused.
		>	Approved sharps container	For disposal of needles and razors after each client service (needles and attached bar).	Approved sharps containers shall be sealed and discarded in accordance with local regulations.
9.	Client aftercare products	AA	Dry, clean dressing Ointment/cream/lotion	The ointment or lotion and dry dressing are applied to freshly tattooed skin to help prevent infection and protect the client's clothing.	Ointment shall be applied with single-use applicator and gloved hands in a manner to prevent contamination. The tattooed skin is to be covered with a dry clean dressing. The client shall be given oral and written instructions about care of the tattooed area, and signs of infection that may require medical treatment.
10.	Practitioner supplies	>	Liquid hand washing soap in a dispenser	Soap is used to wash the practitioner's hands to remove organic matter and transient microorganisms.	After the skin has been cleaned with an antiseptic agent and the packages containing the sterile needle bar(s)/sterile needles from
		A	Alcohol-based hand rubs	Alcohol-based hands rubs containing between 60-90% alcohol can be used to perform hand hygiene when hands are not visibly soiled.	the package and to assemble them on the grip and tube assembly. Gloves shall be removed and changed during the tattooing process if, at any time, the practitioner touches any device or
		>	Hand Lotion	Lotion is used to prevent skin from cracking and to keep the skin in good condition.	surface that may be contaminated. Hand hygiene must be performed before gloves are applied and after
		>	Clean medical gloves	Single-use gloves are to be used as a protective barrier on hands.	glove removal. If the lap pad is cloth, it shall be laundered after each client service.
		>	Lap pad (single use paper or reusable cloth	Worn on the lap of the practitioner to protect clothing.	

For more information, call

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