

• • • • • **HCV And Tattoos** • • • • •

Alan Franciscus

There are not a lot of studies on the risk of becoming infected with hepatitis C from getting a tattoo, but this could happen if someone receives a tattoo in a place that doesn't follow proper safety procedures.

The risk of getting hepatitis C from a tattoo you received on the streets, in prisons or any place where they are not paying attention to safety, greatly increases the risk of getting hepatitis C and other diseases.

Most states have laws about safe tattooing, but unfortunately they do not enforce them. This is why it is so important that the tattoo customers make sure that safety procedures are carefully followed. We can all take part in this by asking questions about safety and by asking to watch while the tattoo artist is giving a tattoo to someone else. Another good way to keep it safe is by asking friends who have received a 'safe' tattoo where they got it and ask their opinion of the tattoo artist.

Most tattoo shops and their owners are very concerned about safety and want to make sure that their customers are safe from getting any type of infec-

tion. They are more than willing to talk about what they are doing to keep their customers safe and disease free.

If you are considering getting a tattoo we recommend that people have a tattoo done only in a commercial shop with professional tattoo artists. Make sure the following practices are followed very closely:

- The artist only uses new sterilized needles and separate pots that hold the ink – only one per customer
- The equipment doesn't come into contact with anything else that could spread an infection
- The equipment that may come into contact with blood is sterilized. An autoclave machine will sterilize equipment
- The tattoo artist uses safety gloves
- All work areas are clean and disinfected
- The fresh tattoo is covered with a dressing to prevent infection or disease transmission
- All materials that come into contact with blood are disposed of safely

Another important thing to remember is to watch your tattoo closely to make sure that it doesn't become infected. If you notice any sign of infection get in to see a doctor as soon as possible.

**hepatitis C
BASICS**

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The information in this fact sheet is designed to help you understand and manage HCV and is not intended as medical advice. All persons with HCV should consult a medical practitioner for diagnosis and treatment of HCV.

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