

Tattoo Aftercare

While your tattoo was created under strict, hospital-grade sterilization conditions, the long-term beauty and health of your new body art now depend on proper aftercare. Strictly adhering to these aftercare instructions will safeguard your investment, ensuring a flawless heal with minimal to no risk of complications.

After you leave the shop:

- **Initial Bandage Duration:** Leave the standard bandage that the artist applied on for exactly **ONE HOUR**. Prolonged coverage can cause fluids to dry and stick to the material, potentially disrupting the healing process.
- **Sanitation First:** Before touching your new tattoo, always wash your hands thoroughly with a high-quality, anti-bacterial soap.
- **Standard Bandage Removal:** Carefully remove the bandage. If the material is adhering to the skin due to dried fluids, gently moisten the bandage with cool water until it releases naturally and can be lifted away without resistance.
- **Medical-Grade (Derm) Bandage Care:** If a transparent dermal bandage was applied, it may remain in place for up to **three days**. However, if the seal is compromised, leaks, or begins to peel open, remove it immediately and proceed to the washing instructions below.

*Never attempt to reapply a dermal bandage once it has been removed. **

- **Washing the Tattoo:** Using your fingertips and a mild, unscented liquid anti-bacterial soap, gently but thoroughly wash the area with cool water. Work up a rich lather to completely remove all plasma, excess ink, and ointment until the skin feels entirely smooth. Rinse carefully by letting the water trickle over the tattoo rather than allowing a heavy stream to strike it directly.
- **Drying Protocols:** Gently blot the tattoo dry using a clean, disposable paper towel. **Do not wipe or scrub the skin.** Avoid using standard cloth bath towels or washcloths, as they can harbor bacteria. Allow the tattoo to air-dry completely for 15–20 minutes after blotting.
- **Moisture Application:** Apply a minimal amount of fragrance-free, basic lotion to the area. Avoid products containing aloe vera, vitamin E, or added perfumes, as these can irritate the skin and cause fading. **Wolf's Fine Line recommends Curel Daily Healing.** Ensure the lotion is completely massaged into the skin, and blot away any excess; over-moisturizing can trap bacteria and promote heavy scabbing.

DO NOT REAPPLY A BANDAGE. TATTOOS MUST BREATHE TO HEAL PROPERLY.

Long-Term Healing Guidelines and Process:

During the remainder of the healing process, adhere to the following daily routine:

- **Maintain Hand Hygiene:** Always wash your hands thoroughly with anti-bacterial soap before touching, cleaning, or applying product to your healing tattoo.
- **Daily Cleansing Routine:** Wash the tattoo two to three times a day using a mild, liquid anti-bacterial soap. Use your fingertips to gently create a lather over the area, then rinse carefully by allowing water to trickle down over the tattoo rather than exposing it to a direct, high-pressure stream.
- **Controlled Drying:** Gently blot the area dry with a clean, disposable paper towel or allow it to air-dry completely.
- **Regulated Moisture:** Once the skin is dry, massage a minimal amount of recommended lotion completely into the tattoo. Always blot away any excess product with a paper towel; over-moisturizing restricts airflow to the skin and promotes heavy scabbing, which can permanently damage the clarity and vibrancy of your tattoo.

Ultimately, the best approach is to minimize contact: once cleaned and lightly moisturized, allow your body's natural healing process to work undisturbed.

The Peeling Process & Restrictions

- **Natural Exfoliation:** Within 2 to 7 days, your tattoo will begin to peel and shed a fine layer of skin. Allow this dead skin to flake off naturally; never pick, scratch, or scrub the area. Be exceptionally careful during showers, as softened skin can be easily forced off prematurely, which can pull ink from the dermis and cause permanent patchy spots.
- **Sun Protection:** Avoid exposing your healing tattoo to direct sunlight for at least two weeks. Once fully healed, always apply a high-SPF sunscreen to the area before sun exposure to preserve color vibrancy and prevent premature fading.
- **Submersion Warning:** Do not submerge the tattoo in water for two weeks, or until it is completely healed. This strictly prohibits swimming, hot tubs, baths, and saunas, including both chlorinated and saltwater environments. Standard showering is perfectly safe.

General Maintenance & Best Practices

- **Pet Interaction:** Avoid direct contact between your healing tattoo and pets. Animal fur, dander, and saliva carry bacteria that can easily compromise an open wound.
- **Sanitary Bedding:** Ensure your bedsheets and linens are freshly laundered if your new tattoo will be resting against them while you sleep.

- **Wardrobe Choices:** Avoid tight-fitting clothing over the tattooed area. Friction from tight fabric can irritate the skin and prematurely pull away healing flakes.
- **Foot and Ankle Placement:** Tattoos located on the lower extremities are prone to localized swelling and may require a longer healing window. To manage this, elevate your feet as often as possible and utilize over-the-counter anti-inflammatories, such as Ibuprofen, as directed.

Studio Note: For your convenience, travel-sized (1oz) tubes of **Curel Daily Healing** lotion are available for purchase directly from the studio.

If you experience any unusual irritation or if you have any questions regarding your recovery process, please do not hesitate to contact **Wolf's Fine Line** or visit the studio during regular business hours.