

Aftercare:

- Aftercare advice will vary from studio to studio. Listen to the instructions your artist gives you – if you request it we have a leaflet with advice printed out for you to take away.
- The majority of advice will tell you to leave the covering on the tattoo for the first 2-5 hours, then to carefully remove it and gently wash the tattoo with lukewarm water and mild liquid soap, like Carex. You should then apply a thin layer of an unscented moisturising cream like Bepanthen (nappy rash cream) – your artist will tell you which they recommend. You can either then recover with cling film/gauze, or leave it open to the air, depending on your artists advice. Generally, studios will advise you to repeat the cleaning process 3-5 times a day.
- Keep the tattoo clean and dry, and avoid soaking it in water for at least a couple of weeks (showers are ok). If your clothes are likely to rub on it, keep it covered with cling film and medical tape.
- Avoid exposing it to direct sunlight unless necessary. Healed tattoos, especially coloured ones, can fade in the sun – so when it's completely healed, make sure it's covered in a high SPF if you're going to be catching some rays.
- Healing times depend on how well you heal and the size of the design. This can range anywhere from around a week for simple, small line designs, to several months for complex, larger designs. Keep following your aftercare instructions for as long as the artist told you to, and make sure the tattoo is kept well-moisturised and clean for a good few months after that, avoiding abrasive skin products.
- As the tattoo heals, it may scab or flake slightly. Avoid picking at it, as this may remove the ink in that area and lead to patches fading or being removed altogether. If it itches, don't scratch– slap it lightly instead. This should only last for the first few weeks or so – if it stays raised, itches uncontrollably, is red around the design, keeps bleeding for more than a day or so after having it done, or is continuously hot to the touch, go back to your artist or seek medical advice. Infected tattoos are very rare but can happen, and it's always worth getting it checked out if you're worried about it.
- If you do lose ink, we will retouch it for free – After about 6 weeks, and once it's fully healed, come back if you need touch-ups on any area of the tattoo.

Many doctors may not understand tattoos. In that same light, tattoo artists are not doctors. The suggestions given in this form are based on the experience of professionals in the tattoo industry and are not intended to be presented as medical advice.