

## Patient information factsheet

# Nipple and areola micropigmentation aftercare advice

You have had nipple and areola micropigmentation today: \_\_\_\_\_.

This factsheet explains what to expect after your procedure. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us using the details at the end of this factsheet.

### Before you leave the department

Before you leave the department, we will give you:

- follow-up advice
- an advice sheet on what you should and should not do after your procedure
- spare dressings (if necessary)

### Wound care

The tattooed area will initially appear darker and brighter. This is normal and will settle within a few weeks.

It is also normal to experience the following symptoms around the tattooed area for a few days after your procedure:

- a small amount of bleeding
- redness
- swelling

When you get home, we advise taking off the dressing and your bra, and wearing a dark, loose piece of clothing. This will allow the area to dry naturally.

In the first few days after your procedure, you may notice some crusting and scabbing over the tattooed area. This is part of the natural healing process. It is important that you do not pick the scabs off as they can draw out the pigment, causing scarring or an infection.

### Washing

We recommend not showering for two to three days after your procedure. However, if you choose to have a shower, you should:

- apply some Vaseline to the tattooed area first as a protective barrier (use a new pot of Vaseline to minimise the risk of infection)
- **not** let the water from the shower run directly over the tattooed area

If you choose to have a bath, you should have a shallow bath. Do **not** soak the tattooed area in the water.

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To clean and care for the tattooed area, follow the instructions below.

1. Wipe the tattooed area gently with clean water and a clean, soft cloth (do not use any soap or shower gel).
2. Pat the tattooed area dry with a clean towel, piece of kitchen roll or gauze.
3. Reapply a small amount of Vaseline for the first two to three days until the tattooed area is completely dry.
4. Place a clean, dry dressing over the tattooed area when wearing a bra or clothing to protect the area from rubbing on your clothes (we can provide you with spare dressings).

## Exercise and activities

Chlorine (a disinfectant used in swimming pools to keep the water hygienic) can cause fading or changes to the tattoo pigment. You should avoid the following activities for at least **two weeks** after your procedure to prevent changes to the pigment:

- swimming
- sunbathing
- using a sauna, steam room or jacuzzi

**You should avoid having any laser treatments, such as laser hair removal, on the tattooed area as this can change the colour of the pigment and even turn the pigment black.**

## Infection

To help reduce the risk of infection, you should avoid the following activities until the tattooed area is fully healed:

- excessive exercise
- any activity that will cause sweating
- hot baths

## Future medical treatments or procedures

If you need to have a CT or MRI scan in the future, it is important that you tell the scanning technician that you have a medical tattoo. Some pigment colours used for medical tattoos contain traces of iron oxide which can cause you to experience a slight tingling or burning sensation in the treated area when having a CT or MRI scan. Some pigments can also interact with the magnetic fields or radiation used in scans, which can affect the images taken.

You should avoid giving blood for at least **four months** after your procedure.

## When to seek urgent medical help

Contact NHS 111 for advice immediately if you:

- feel unwell or have a high temperature (38°C or above)
- develop swelling, bruising, a rash or tenderness over the tattoo or surrounding area
- notice the tattoo feels hotter than the rest of your skin

In an emergency, go to your nearest emergency department.

## Follow-up care

We will arrange a follow-up face-to-face appointment for you six weeks after your first micropigmentation appointment.

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## Contact us

If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact us.

### For non-urgent queries

Breast clinical nurse specialists (CNS)

Telephone: **023 8120 3753** (Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm)

Please leave a voicemail with your name, hospital number and a brief reason for your call. We will aim to return your call by the next working day.

### For urgent queries

Contact NHS 111 for advice.

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For help preparing for your visit, arranging an interpreter or accessing the hospital, please visit **www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalsupport**

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