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TATTOO AFTERCARE SHEET

- ★ PLEASE FOLLOW ONLY THESE INSTRUCTIONS AND NOT THE ADVICE OF YOUR FRIENDS.
- ★ ALWAYS WASH YOUR HANDS FIRST, BEFORE YOU TOUCH YOUR NEW TATTOO. REMOVE THE BANDAGE AFTER ONE HOUR, TWO AT MAX. ALL WOUNDS NEED TO BREATHE IF THEY ARE TO HEAL PROPERLY. (IN HEAVY DIRT AREAS ASK STUDIO ABOUT BANDAGING).
- ★ **WASH THE TATTOO** USING YOUR CLEAN FINGERTIPS OR HAND ONLY. USE A MILD ANTIBACTERIAL SOAP AND WARM WATER. TAKE CARE TO REMOVE ALL TRACES OF BLOOD/PLASMA, AS THIS WILL CAUSE SCABBING. DO NOT SCRUB THE TATTOO WITH A WASHCLOTH DURING THE TWO-WEEK HEALING PERIOD. ALWAYS GENTLY PAT THE TATTOO DRY WITH A CLEAN SOFT PAPER TOWEL (DO NOT USE A HAND TOWEL) OR JUST LET IT AIR DRY.
- ★ YOU CAN APPLY A VERY THIN COAT OF **AFTER INKED** TO THE TATTOO (LESS THAN A PEA SIZED AMOUNT). YOU CAN USE A NON-SCENTED LOTION LIKE LUBRIDERM SENSITIVE OR AVEENO (JUST ENOUGH TO MAKE IT SHINE, A LITTLE GOES A LONG WAY). WORK IT IN WELL. DAB OFF ALL THE EXCESS WITH A PAPER TOWEL. THIS IS JUST ENOUGH TO KEEP THE TATTOO MOIST AND TO KEEP IT FROM SCABBING. IF IT BECOMES GLOSSY LOOKING OR RUNNY IT MEANS, THERE'S TOO MUCH ON THERE. DAB MORE OFF. TOO MUCH LOTION WILL ONLY SUFFOCATE THE TATTOO AND LIQUEFY ANY SCABS THAT MAY HAVE FORMED CAUSING THE INK TO FALL OUT AND LOOK BLOTCHY. THERE IS NO NEED TO RE-BANDAGE THE TATTOO.
- ★ **AFTER INKED** CAN BE APPLIED WHENEVER THE TATTOO IS FEELING STIFF OR DRY BUT BEWARE OF OVER-MOISTURIZING. YOUR BODY WILL ABSORB WHAT IT NEEDS WHERE IT NEEDS IT. WITH CLEAN HANDS ONLY, APPLY TWICE A DAY FOR TWO TO THREE DAYS THEN AS NEEDED. IF SEVERELY DRY YOU CAN USE A PEA-SIZED AMOUNT OF VASELINE INTENSIVE CARE. APPLY THE MOISTURIZER TWICE A DAY FOR THE REMAINDER OF TWO WEEKS. DO NOT USE LOTIONS THAT CONTAIN COLOR, FRAGRANCE OR SPARKLES UNTIL THE HEALING IS COMPLETE. (USUALLY ANYWHERE FROM TEN DAYS TO TWO WEEKS; POSSIBLY LONGER FOR SLOWER HEALERS.)
- ★ YOUR SKIN WILL FORM A PROTECTIVE LAYER NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO. IF YOUR TATTOO IS TOO DRY OR TOO MOIST (A TRICKY BALANCE, DIFFERENT FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL), IT CAN FORM A THICK, HARD SCAB THAT MAY CRACK FROM DRYNESS OR OOZE FROM OVER MOISTURIZING WHEN YOU MOVE. WHEN YOU FORM THIS KIND OF A SCAB THE INK SITS WITHIN IT AND SLOWLY HEALS INTO THE SKIN. WHEN THE TATTOO IS HEALING PROPERLY IT DOESN'T HAVE A CHANCE TO FORM A HEAVY SCAB BUT DOES FORM A THIN MEMBRANE TO PROTECT THE TATTOO WHILE IT HEALS. THIS LAYER PEELS OFF VERY SIMILAR TO SUNBURNT SKIN. (DO NOT PEEL OR PICK AT YOUR TATTOO, YOU WILL PULL THE INK OUT). IT IS PERFECTLY NORMAL TO SEE SMALL FLAKES OF COLORED SKIN FALLING OFF DURING THIS STAGE OF HEALING. REMEMBER, IF IT BLEEDS YOU ARE LIKELY LOSING INK.
- ★ **SHOWERING & BATHING:** YOU MUST KEEP YOUR TATTOO CLEAN, HOWEVER LONG SHOWERS OR BATHS MUST BE AVOIDED FOR 2 WEEKS. PROLONGED SOAKING CAN AND WILL LOOSEN SCABS IF ANY HAVE FORMED, OR WILL SOAK THROUGH THE SOFT TISSUE TURNING IT INTO A SOGGY MESS AND CAUSE YOUR INK TO FLOW DOWN THE DRAIN. THIS INCLUDES SWIMMING IN THE OCEAN OR A POOL, HOT TUBS, AND SAUNAS. SHORT SHOWERS ARE BEST.

★ DO NOT SWIM IN PUBLIC WATER AREAS (INCLUDING POOLS, LAKES, RIVERS, OCEANS ETC.) WHILE HEALING TO AVOID BACTERIA. KEEP WATER EXPOSURE UNDER 10 MINUTES IF POSSIBLE.

★ PLEASE REFRAIN FROM SCRATCHING OR PICKING AT THE TATTOO. SCRUBBING WITH A WASHCLOTH CAN BE VERY HARSH ON A TATTOO AND WILL CAUSE YOUR COLORS TO FADE. DISRUPTING THE TATTOO WHILE IT'S HEALING CAN ALSO CAUSE SCAR TISSUE. IT IS NORMAL FOR THE TATTOO TO BECOME VERY ITCHY DURING THE HEALING TIME. TO RELIEVE THIS, SLAP IT WITH YOUR HAND (THIS WILL STING IT AND TAKE AWAY THE ITCH).

★ **SUN & TATTOOS.** ANY WAY YOU LOOK AT IT, THE SUN IS BAD FOR YOUR TATTOO, EVEN IF YOU'VE HAD IT FOR A LONG TIME. ANY SUNBURN ON A NEW TATTOO CAN CAUSE A LOT OF PROBLEMS. IT WILL DRY OUT YOUR TATTOO AND CAUSE IT TO FORM A HORRENDOUS SCAB MUCH OF THE TIME CAUSING THE TATTOO TO FADE BEFORE IT IS EVEN HEALED. IT WILL TAKE MUCH LONGER TO HEAL COMPLETELY. IT CREATES SCARRING IN A NEW TATTOO. WAIT UNTIL IT IS FULLY HEALED TO GO BACK IN THE SUN OR A TANNING BED AND MAKE SURE YOU PUT ON A HIGH QUALITY SUNBLOCK (NOT SUNSCREEN).

DO NOT APPLY SUNBLOCK WHILE THE TATTOO IS HEALING.

THE TATTOO IS UNDER YOUR SKIN, AND YOUR TAN WILL FORM ABOVE IT. IF YOU GET TOO DARK, SOME COLORS (WHITE, YELLOW, PINK, AND ORANGE) MAY NOT SHOW UP AS BRIGHTLY AS THEY COULD. OVER TIME, EXCESSIVE EXPOSURE TO SUNLIGHT WILL CAUSE YOUR TATTOO TO FADE NO MATTER WHAT COLORS ARE USED.

★ **JUST A NOTE:**

REMEMBER THAT HANDS AND FEET REPRODUCE SKIN CELLS MUCH FASTER THAN OTHER PARTS OF THE BODY. A TATTOO IN THESE AREAS WILL SOMETIMES TAKE AN EXTRA TWO WEEKS TO HEAL. DURING THIS TIME REFRAIN FROM WASHING DISHES, WEARING GLOVES, OR WEARING SOCKS AND SHOES (SANDALS MUST NOT RUB THE TATTOO). ANY FRICTION OF THIS TYPE WILL WEAR AWAY THE TATTOO WITHIN A VERY SHORT PERIOD OF TIME. TATTOOS IN THESE AREAS ARE ALMOST NEVER GUARANTEED. (IE. RING TATTOOS).

★ **HEAVY SCABBING**

INDIVIDUALS HEAL IN SO MANY DIFFERENT WAYS; IT'S HARD TO TELL (ESPECIALLY WITH FIRST-TIMERS) EXACTLY WHAT WILL HAPPEN - WHETHER THE TATTOO WILL SCAB OR PEEL. A TATTOO IN ONE SPOT MAY HEAL COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM A TATTOO IN ANOTHER SPOT. THE WAY AN ARTIST WORKS THE SKIN CAN ALSO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE WAY A TATTOO HEALS. THERE IS NO WAY TO PREDICT EXACTLY WHAT EVERY TATTOO IS CAPABLE OF DOING WHILE HEALING OR HOW TO HEAL IT.

WHILE IT'S PROBABLY BETTER FOR A TATTOO TO PEEL, SOMETIMES PEOPLE JUST DON'T HEAL THIS WAY. SOMETIMES A SCAB WILL FORM NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO. FOR SOME, IT'S HARD TO TELL WHETHER OR NOT A SCAB IS FORMING. SOMETIMES A PIECE WILL LOOK LIKE IT'S SCABBED OVER BUT WILL PEEL, OTHER TIMES IT'S OBVIOUS THAT A THICK, HARD SCAB HAS FORMED. IF A SCAB DOES FORM YOU MAY HAVE TO DO THINGS A BIT DIFFERENTLY. YOU SHOULD ALWAYS CHECK WITH YOUR ARTIST OR THE STUDIO BEFORE YOU CHANGE ANY OF YOUR AFTERCARE PROCEDURES. EACH ARTIST HAS HIS OR HER OWN METHODS OF AFTERCARE. IF YOU DEVIATE FROM THEIR AFTERCARE WITHOUT SEEKING THEIR ADVICE AND THE TATTOO HEALS BADLY, YOU FORFEIT ANY GUARANTEE FOR TOUCHUPS.

★ IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS, PLEASE CALL THE STUDIO. IF YOU HAVE ANY HEALING ISSUES, SUCH AS EXCESSIVE SWELLING, SORENESS, REDNESS OR PUSS, PLEASE SEE YOUR PHYSICIAN WITHIN 24 HOURS FOR MEDICAL ATTENTION.