

If you intend to apply any product to the design follow the guidance given below:

- Remove the amount needed into a smaller clean container, using a clean spoon or spatula.
- Don't put the spoon or spatula back into the tube, bottle or tub once it has been used.
- Always wash the spoon, spatula or any other equipment used thoroughly after use.
- When applying the product onto the design do not apply to the surrounding skin. This will cause damage and affect the desired result.

### Your operator is:

**For further advice or information contact:**  
Your local Environmental Health Department,  
the Community Infection Control Nurse at  
your local Primary Care Trust (PCT)  
or  
your local Health Protection Unit

**Information produced by:**  
Health Protection Agency North West  
Health Protection Agency East Midlands  
South  
<http://www.hpa.org.uk/>  
President of Tattoo and Piercing Industry  
Union.

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## Branding and Scarification Aftercare



**Branding**; the art form of burning the skin with heated metal to form a simple but permanent design.

Branding may be performed using stainless steel strips, cauterising irons or lasers.

**Scarification** is the cutting into the skin then peeling away the layers until the design is completed.

For both practices specific healing is paramount to obtain the desired effect.

As with all body art, infection is a risk. To reduce these risks take advice from your operator regarding aftercare.

The risk of infection can be greatly reduced by good general hygiene including:

- Hand washing before touching the wound
- Keeping the wound clean

## Hand washing

Hand washing is the single most important method of reducing infection. Hands must be washed prior to touching the affected area, therefore reducing the risk of infection.

Wash your hands in warm water and liquid soap, always dry your hands thoroughly with a clean towel or paper towel. This should remove most germs and prevent them being transferred to the affected area.

## Aftercare for branding

Once branded, the area should be left undisturbed for the first 3 days apart from general everyday washing with a mild antibacterial soap and gentle drying with a lint free cloth. Emollient cream can be applied around the edges of the brand every few hours to help ease tightening of the skin. Take care not to put any cream into the area of the wound.

If you intend to remove the scab on the fourth day take care not to damage the surrounding skin.

## Aftercare for scarification

Following the procedure the wound will be wrapped in plastic wrap (i.e. cling film) . This should be worn for approximately three hours. It should then be removed and the area washed with antibacterial wash.

Once washed and dried it should be re-wrapped with **clean** plastic wrapping

Repeat this procedure every 4-6 hours for the initial three weeks .

Thereafter, the plastic wrap can be changed every 8-12 hours. Make sure the wound is washed and dried between changes.

## Scab formation

If you have decided to remove scabs to increase scar formation over the area of the design, soak the site in warm water and then gently remove the scabs with clean tweezers. Ensure hands are washed and dried thoroughly before carrying out the procedure. Do not tear the scabs off without soaking because this will damage the surrounding skin and ultimately damage the overall effect of the design.

**Keep the area clean at all times to prevent infection**

## Signs of infection

If appropriate aftercare is not followed infection may occur. The signs of infection are:

- Swelling and redness that increases around the wound.
- A severe burning and throbbing sensation round the site.
- Increased tenderness and increasingly painful to touch.
- An unusual discharge (yellow or green) with an offensive smell.

**If you suffer from any of the above or have any concerns regarding infection in your design speak to your operator or seek medical attention immediately.**