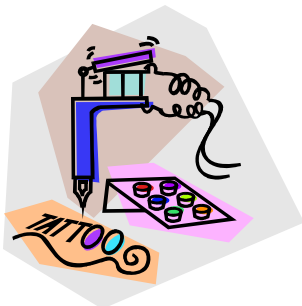


### MARCH IS TATTOO SAFETY MONTH

#### Inspections of Tattoo Establishments

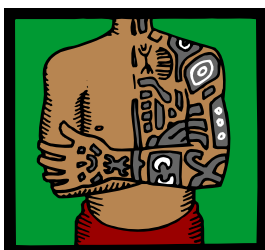
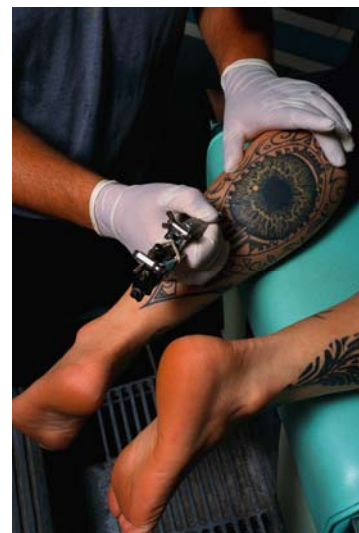


Did you know that the Scott County Health Department inspects all licensed tattoo establishments in Scott and Clinton counties? Currently there are 16 licensed tattoo establishments in these counties. A yearly inspection is done to make sure that all equipment meets Iowa code, the establishment is clean and has sterile equipment, records are properly kept, and that staff knows how to use the equipment correctly. A list of all licensed tattoo establishments in Scott and Clinton counties is available at the Scott County Health Department's website at [www.scottcountyiowa.com/health](http://www.scottcountyiowa.com/health). Also on our website, you will find links to the Iowa Code, Administrative Rules, application for a tattoo artist permit, application for a permit to operate a tattoo establishment, and a tattoo inspection checklist.

#### Tips to a Safe Tattoo Experience

If you are thinking about getting a tattoo, be sure to pay close attention to the following tips from the Alliance of Professional Tattooist to make sure that your experience is safe and enjoyable experience.

- Make sure that your tattoo artist shows you a new needle and tube set-up from a sealed envelope before starting your tattoo.
- Watch your tattoo artist pour a new ink supply into a new disposable container.
- It is recommended that your tattoo artist should put on a new pair of disposable gloves before setting up tubes, needles, and ink supplies. If the artist does not have these on, it is your right to ask that he/she put gloves on before setting up the supplies.
- Look around the establishment and at the tattooist to be sure that everything is clean and in order.
- It is your right to ask the tattoo artist about their sterile procedures, as well as their experience and qualifications.
- If you do not feel comfortable, go to a different licensed tattoo artist.

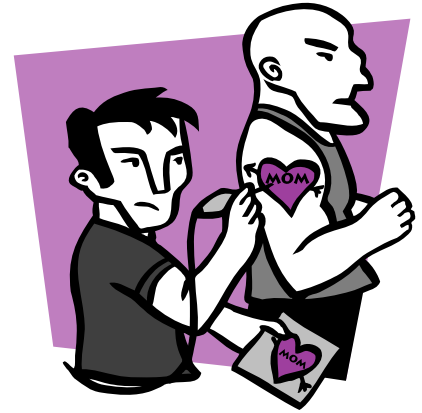


#### Resources:

- Alliance of Professional Tattooist: [www.safe-tattoos.com](http://www.safe-tattoos.com)
- Hepatitis C Support Project: [www.hcvadvocate.org](http://www.hcvadvocate.org)
- Iowa Department of Public Health: [www.idph.state.ia.us](http://www.idph.state.ia.us)

## Can I Get Hepatitis C from a Tattoo?

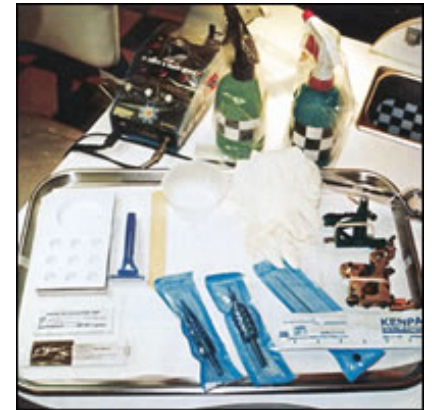
Although you could get hepatitis C from a tattoo, it is not very likely if precautions are taken. Hepatitis C is a liver disease that is caused by the hepatitis C virus. In the United States, it is estimated that approximately four million people have hepatitis C. This disease is spread through blood-to-blood contact. If a tattoo is given in an establishment that is not sterile or licensed, such as on the streets or in someone's garage, or by using equipment that is not sterile, then it is possible that hepatitis C can be spread. This is why it is important to only use tattoo establishments that are licensed and to see for yourself that safety steps are being taken BEFORE you get a tattoo. Remember, tattoos last forever and so can hepatitis C.



## Rules and Tattoos in Iowa

Knowing the rules about tattoos is a great way to protect yourself by making sure that your safety is the priority of the tattoo establishment of your choice. Below are a few of the rules about tattoos in Iowa.

- Tattoo establishments must have a permit to operate and the permit must be posted.
- Currently in Iowa, you must be 18 years old to get a tattoo.
- Smoking, eating, or drinking is not allowed in the area where the tattoo is being done.
- The cups to hold the ink or dye should only be used for one person.
- If needles were dipped into any ink or dye, no one else may use the same ink or dye.
- Tubes, needle bars, and needles that are used in the tattoo procedure that are not disposable must be cleaned in a detergent and sterilized according to the rules before use on another person.
- All equipment must be clean and sanitary.
- Needles and other sharps must be gotten rid of properly.
- Hands must be washed by the tattoo artist prior to starting a tattoo. Gloves are recommended.
- The tattoo establishment should be at least 150 square feet with adequate light and ventilation. The establishment should also be clean and sanitary.



For more detailed information and a complete list of the rules, visit the Scott County Health Department's website, [www.scottcountyiowa.com/health](http://www.scottcountyiowa.com/health) and click on "Tanning & Tattoos" under the Environmental Health heading on the left-hand side. From there click on the tattooing program, and then open the Administrative Rules PDF file.

If you would like to receive this newsletter and other Scott County Health Department press releases electronically, please add your name to our e-mail list on our website at: [www.scottcountyiowa.com/health](http://www.scottcountyiowa.com/health).

