

Sky's Tattoo Aftercare

Congratulations on your new tattoo! Remember, a tattoo is a lifetime investment. Here is what I recommend to ensure it heals well and looks good for years to come!

The first day:

Your tattoo will be bandaged after your appointment. Unless I tell you otherwise, leave the bandage on until the morning after your appointment. Then remove the bandage and wash your tattoo in the shower, cleaning off any excess lotion, ink, and blood under water that's as hot as you can handle comfortably. Use mild liquid soap from a bottle, not a bar, and wash it with your hands, not a loofah or washcloth. I recommend antibacterial hand soaps like Dial or Softsoap or natural soaps like Dr. Bronners. I don't recommend soaps that are excessively perfumey like body washes, and definitely no body scrubs! After showering, gently pat your tattoo dry with a clean paper towel because bath towels can leave behind bacteria or fuzzy residue. Do not re-bandage your tattoo. Your first night, I recommend changing your bed sheets to a freshly cleaned set and please, no pets sleeping in the bed for at least the first few nights! Bacteria from pets is the most common cause of tattoo infections. Your tattoo may leave ink or blood stains on your bed the first night so I also recommend either dark-colored sheets or wearing clean, dark-colored pajamas made of a loose, breathable fabric like cotton.

The first 2 weeks:

Treat your new tattoo like an open wound... because it is! The top layer of skin will harden into a very thin scab and then peel off, similarly to a sunburn. This is normal and though it may feel itchy or uncomfortable, do not scratch it or pick at it. Your tattoo is most susceptible to infection and damage in the first week so keep it clean, dry and out of the sun. Wash your tattoo 1-2 times a day. If you have to be in the sun, cover it with clothing. Do not use sunblock while it's still healing. Do not submerge your tattoo under standing water in any way, which means no baths, swimming, hot tubs, etc. If you work somewhere where your tattoo may get dirty and you don't have time or a place to wash it, I recommend spraying it with a First Aid disinfecting product like Bactine periodically while working. If you want to put lotion on your tattoo, I recommend waiting until two days after your appointment, and then using a very thin layer of unscented lotion like Aquaphor, Curell, or Cetaphil once a day. Less is more, remember: you're not frosting a cake! You can consider your tattoo healed after 2 or 3 weeks.

Lifetime tattoo care:

Your tattoo is for life! The better you care for it, the better it will look as your skin ages over your lifetime. The biggest factor is sun exposure. It will cause linework to become fuzzy over time and it will fade the color of the ink. Wear 50+ SPF sunblock as much as possible when you're outdoors. I personally keep spare bottles of sunblock in my purse and car so it's easy to apply on the go. Use 100% aloe vera gel if your tattoo does get exposed to prolonged sunlight or gets sunburned. Beyond sun protection, exfoliating occasionally can help keep your tattoo looking bright by sloughing the top layer of skin, and applying some moisturizing lotion a few times a week will keep your skin hydrated and supple!

If you have any questions regarding tattoo care, feel free to reach out to me right away!

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