



GET THE FACTS ABOUT

BODY ART

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TATTOOING & PIERCING

NOT INTENDED FOR HOME USE

If you are considering a tattoo or piercing, you should always go to a licensed, state-regulated business.



DON'T DO IT at home, at school, at a party, or anywhere else except at a professional business or studio.

WHY?

You could:

- get a serious infection
- have an allergic reaction
- permanently damage your skin
- not like the way it looks



NOT INTENDED FOR HOME USE

Professionals are more likely to use equipment that is properly cleaned and sterilized. They are more likely to be educated about the risks that come with getting body art.

INFECTION SITE

Just like sharing needles for drugs, home piercings and tattoos increase the risk of getting a blood-related infection. A few of the most serious infections are:

HEPATITIS B & C

- viruses that cause permanent liver damage and even death
- there is no cure

HIV

- the virus that causes AIDS
- there is no cure

STAPH INFECTION

- caused by bacteria
- most are minor if treated early
- severe staph infections can be deadly



DID YOU KNOW...

wearing jewelry in or near your mouth can chip your teeth or cause an infection in your tongue or gums? See a dentist every six months to make sure your piercing is not doing permanent damage to your teeth or gums. A body art professional knows how to place a piercing correctly so it won't cause damage.

ONLY WITH THE PROS

If you are thinking about getting a tattoo or piercing, know that every state has different laws on age limits and parental consent. Call your local licensed body art shop to ask about your local laws. All good shops have the laws posted in public view. Check out the resource page for a list of state laws.



AUTOClave:

a pressurized and steam-heated container used to sterilize equipment.

Things to look for:

- Is this business licensed (holds a certificate that should be posted where people can see it)?
- Does it appear clean?
- Does it have an autoclave?
- Is the artist's work area sterilized between customers?
- Are the artist's hands washed using antibacterial soap AND are medical gloves used?
- Are needles or instruments that pierce the skin used only once and then thrown away?
- Are disposable piercing needles used instead of piercing guns?

USE A LICENSED ARTIST

Home tattoos or piercings can put you at risk for disease or injury.

Things to ask:

- How often is the place cleaned and tested for bacteria?
- For tattoos, does the artist pour the ink into a disposable container?
- What procedures are used to prevent the spread of HIV and other infections?



RESOURCES

www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/body_art/default.html

www.teenhealthfx.com/answers/health-illness/piercings-and-tattoos.html

www.ncsl.org/research/health/tattooing-and-body-piercing.aspx

www.liveabout.com/tattoos-and-body-piercings-4772215

www.iknowmine.org

www.wernative.org

www.projectknow.com

