



CAMBRIDGE-GUERNSEY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT A Combined General Health District

"ESTABLISHED - 1950"

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Illegal Home Tattooing

Illegal home tattooing, also known as DIY tattooing or backyard tattooing, is any tattooing that is performed outside of a licensed tattoo operation. Getting illegal tattoos puts your health at risk because the procedures in place to ensure clean and safe tattooing in licensed premises do not occur. Illegal tattooists who perform tattoos generally do not have proper infection prevention and control training. Training is required for tattoo artists who work in licensed tattoo operations, and who are required by law to provide clean and sterile tattoo equipment.

The Risks of Illegal Tattoos

Getting a tattoo carries some health risks. Illegal tattooing puts you at a greater risk of:

- Contracting serious infectious diseases, including Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV.
- Contracting severe skin infections, including bacterial infections such as Staph.
- Using poor quality tattooing equipment and inks containing substances which may cause long-term health effects.
- Scarring from skin infections.

The effects of these complications can be debilitating and life-long. Removal of unwanted tattoos are not always successful and the associated health risk includes scarring and further infections.

Reducing the Risks of Illegal Tattooing

- Only receive tattoos from licensed, inspected tattoo artists. Your local health department licenses and inspects tattoo operations.
- Illegal tattooing is not safe and can put you at risk for serious infections.
- If you are aware of illegal tattooing, file a report with the Guernsey County Health Department.

Any questions, please contact the Environmental Health Staff at the Guernsey County Health Department at 740-439-3577.

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