



TATTOO AFTERCARE

THE FIVE-DAY RULE

FOR THE FIRST FIVE DAYS, WE'RE PLAYING ONE GAME:

DON'T LET IT DRY OUT.

The first five days are the most important part of your tattoo's initial healing process. Keep it protected and appropriately moisturised so it heals softly rather than becoming excessively dry and forming heavy scabs.

For most tattoos, this happens in two stages:

Days 1-3: The tattoo stays protected underneath the aftercare sticker.

Days 4-5: The sticker comes off and you take over with regular cleansing and Palmer's cocoa butter.

If your sticker needs to come off earlier than three days, don't panic. Simply move onto the cleansing and cream routine earlier.

DAYS 1-3: THE STICKER

Most tattoos will leave the studio protected by an adhesive aftercare sticker. Ideally, this stays in place for approximately 72 hours.

During the first few hours, bubbles and pockets of fluid may appear underneath it. This is expected as your skin naturally releases plasma and fluid during initial healing.

As long as everything feels comfortable and the sticker remains properly sealed, leave it alone. If an air pocket develops during the first few hours, gently work the trapped air towards the edge while maintaining the seal.

REMOVE THE STICKER EARLY IF:

- The edges begin peeling and the seal is compromised.
- Excessive fluid or weeping builds up underneath it.
- The tattoo feels excessively hot.
- You develop significant itching.
- You experience irritation underneath or around the sticker.

Once the seal has failed, do not keep a compromised sticker on. Remove it, clean the tattoo and begin the cocoa-butter routine immediately.

HOW TO REMOVE YOUR STICKER

Do not grab it and rip it off. Take your time.

Using a hairdryer on a medium setting from approximately 25 cm away, gently warm a small section of the dressing. Start at one corner and gradually work across, approximately an inch at a time.

Some areas may release easily without assistance. Only use additional warmth where the adhesive feels particularly stuck. The aim is a slow, controlled and comfortable removal.

Once it is off, it is time for the full cleanse.

THE FULL CLEANSE

YOU WILL NEED

- Clean kitchen roll
- Warm water
- A small amount of soap or hand wash
- Palmer's cocoa butter
- A bin nearby

1. Wash your hands thoroughly.
2. Soak 3-4 sheets of fresh kitchen roll with medium-warm water and press out the excess so they are wet but not dripping.
3. Gently wipe across the tattoo, dabbing where necessary to remove plasma, fluid, old cream or surface material. Do not scrub. Dispose of the kitchen roll immediately.
4. Wash your hands again. Reload with fresh kitchen roll and gently pat across the tattoo to pick up anything remaining. Dispose of it and allow the tattoo to air-dry for 1-2 minutes.
5. Wash your hands again with warm soapy water and dry them using fresh kitchen roll.

Yes, that is a lot of hand washing - and a mortgage-worth of kitchen roll.

That is deliberate. A fresh tattoo is an open wound, so everything touching it should be kept as clean as practically possible.

APPLYING THE COCOA BUTTER

Once the tattoo is clean and dry and your hands are freshly washed, apply Palmer's cocoa butter. You do not need loads.

Larger tattoo: start with no more than approximately an acorn-sized amount at a time.

Small tattoo or touch-up: use approximately a pea-sized amount at most.

Spread it gently. The goal is enough moisture to prevent excessive dryness without completely smothering the tattoo in cream.

EVERY CREAM APPLICATION MEANS ANOTHER CLEANSE

Do not put fresh cocoa butter over old cocoa butter. Whenever it is time to reapply, repeat the cleaning procedure:

CLEAN TATTOO. CLEAN KITCHEN ROLL. CLEAN HANDS. FRESH CREAM.

This prevents you repeatedly trapping whatever has accumulated on the surface underneath another layer of cream. If the tattoo begins to dry out, do not leave it sitting dry for hours.

IF YOU'RE AT WORK OR AWAY FROM HOME

Plan ahead and take what you need. As an emergency fallback, WaterWipes can be useful if circumstances genuinely prevent the proper cleanse and the alternative is leaving the tattoo unattended for a prolonged period.

Wipes are an emergency option, not the normal routine. Whenever possible, use warm water, hand washing, fresh kitchen roll and cream.

DAYS 4-5: YOU'RE DOING THE STICKER'S JOB NOW

If your sticker lasted the full 72 hours, you are now entering the final two days of the Five-Day Rule. Keep the tattoo clean and prevent it becoming excessively dry.

Continue cleansing before applying cocoa butter, and apply it diligently enough that the tattoo is not left dry and unnourished for prolonged periods.

REMEMBER: DON'T LET IT DRY OUT.

AFTERCARE DOESN'T STOP ON DAY 5

The Five-Day Rule does not mean your tattoo is healed in five days. It means this is the period where we are particularly diligent about preventing unnecessary dryness and heavy scabbing.

If you reach Day 6, everything is healing nicely and there are no signs or obvious risks of scabbing, reduce the cocoa butter to approximately twice daily. Continue until around Day 10.

First 5 days: intensive aftercare.

Up to around 10 days: continued moisturising while the skin settles.

WHEN TO GET HELP

Seek medical advice if redness, swelling, heat or pain is worsening rather than settling; if you develop pus, red streaking, a fever or feel unwell; or if you have signs of a serious allergic reaction. If you are worried, contact NHS 111. Call 999 for a severe reaction or breathing difficulty.

This guide supports normal tattoo aftercare and does not replace individual medical advice.