



To contact the Medical Officer of Health, call 625-5965 or email: moh@tbdhu.com

TATTOO SHOP CLOSURE MAY INCREASE CALLS & VISITS TO HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

Please be advised that on July 19, 2006, the Thunder Bay District Health Unit issued a close order to a local tattoo shop and the following news release:

Oceanic Tattoos located at 112 East Frederica Street in the Westfort area of Thunder Bay has been closed by public health inspectors because the operator was not sterilizing equipment using approved methods.

Improper sterilization of equipment can lead to the transmission of diseases such as HIV and hepatitis B and C.

“We have no evidence of transmission of infection. While the investigation indicated the operator used disposable needles, he did not properly sterilize other equipment. The risk is low, but the potential for infection does exist,” stated Dr. Nancy Cameron, Medical Officer of Health for the Thunder Bay District Health Unit.

“As a precaution, we are advising customers of the tattoo shop to consider the potential risk to their health. Anyone who received a tattoo from this business and has concerns should contact a health care professional.”

For more information, please call the Infectious Disease Program at 625-8341 or toll-free at 1-888-294-6630, extension 8341. They will be able to speak to Infection Control staff between 8:30 – 4:30 weekdays. More information is also posted on the Health Unit website www.tbdhu.com.

The closure may result in an increase in calls or visits to your office or clinic from those patients who were customers at the tattoo shop. For patient enquiries, the attached FAQ is also being circulated and posted on our website, www.tbdhu.com.

If you have a patient exhibiting symptoms of HIV or Hepatitis B or C and they have a tattoo, please inquire about where they received the tattoo. The Thunder Bay District Health Unit is interested in any information that may aid us in our investigation. You may contact the Infectious Disease Program by calling 625-8318.

Should you or your staff have any questions about this, please contact the Infectious Disease Program at (807) 625-8318.

Sincerely,

Darlene Binette
Manager, Infectious Disease Program

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Frequently Asked Questions: Tattoo Shop Closure, July 19, 2006

What tattoo shop has the Health Unit closed and why?

Oceanic Tattoos located at 112 East Frederica Street in the Westfort area. It has been open for at least 6 years.

The tattoo shop operator was not sterilizing equipment using approved methods. The shop operator also did not keep adequate equipment sterilization records and client records. These are the minimum Ontario standards required for tattoo shops.

What equipment was found not sterilized?

Parts of the tattoo gun were not properly sterilized using approved methods. However, these parts ARE NOT USED to pierce the skin. Therefore, risk of infection is low.

Did the operator reuse needles?

The Health Unit investigation did not find the operator reused needles. The operator indicated he used disposable, single-use needles.

Since the operator did not reuse needles, what is the risk of infection?

The risk of infection is low. But, the potential for illness exists.

What infections can be spread by using improperly sterilized tattoo equipment?

Whenever you get a procedure that breaks the skin, you are at risk of infection. Infections can include:

- Skin infections
- Hepatitis B
- Hepatitis C
- HIV

Is there any evidence of infections from this tattoo shop?

At this time, there is no evidence of infections. This shop was closed because the operator was not sterilizing equipment using approved methods.

Who is at risk?

Anyone who got a tattoo from this operator may be at risk.

Why isn't the Health Unit calling customers of the tattoo shop?

The operator did not have a complete set of records with customer names and phone numbers.

What do I do if I think I'm at risk, or if I want to know if I have been infected?

Please visit your doctor, a walk in clinic or a healthcare provider.

Where can I get more information?

For more information please call 807-625-8341, or toll free at 1-888-294-6630, ext. 8341. Or, please visit tbduhu.com and see the "Beauty and Body Art" section under "Infectious Diseases".