

# Tattoos and HCV

## EASY C FACTS

There is a very real chance that a person could get hepatitis C (HCV or Hep C for short) while having a tattoo if safety practices are not followed very carefully.

The risk is much higher if you get a tattoo in prison, on the streets or from a friend because there is usually less attention to safety.

If you have received a tattoo from a person or in a place that does not follow

proper safety measures, it might be a good idea to get tested for HCV since there is a greater risk of catching it in these unsafe settings.

If you decide to get a tattoo, ask the tattoo artist about safety procedures. You might even want to ask if you can watch while they work on someone else so that you can see that they are using safer tattooing practices.

### **Safety Tips**

***We recommend only commercial tattoo artists who practice the following:***

- ◆ Use only new sterilized needles and separate ink pots
- ◆ Make sure equipment doesn't come into contact with anything else that could spread an infection
- ◆ Sterilize any equipment that may come into contact with blood
- ◆ Use safety gloves
- ◆ Clean and disinfect surfaces
- ◆ Cover a fresh tattoo with a dressing to prevent infection or disease transmission
- ◆ Safely dispose of any materials that come into contact with blood
- ◆ Check your tattoo regularly to make sure it has not become infected
- ◆ **Any Signs of Infection—See a Doctor!**

[www.hcvadvocate.org](http://www.hcvadvocate.org)