

For Press Release

August 20, 2012

Jackson County Health and Human Services, Public Health, Environmental Health

Susie West 715-284-4301 ext 408

## TATTOO'S AND YOU

Tattoos have become popular as a fashion trend over the last decade. Tattoos come in all shapes and sizes, and they can appear almost anywhere on someone's body. Permanent cosmetic studios also tattoo on eyebrows, eyeliner and lip liner for those who want to make their makeup permanent. You could be the proud owner of a new tattoo in a matter of hours — but don't let the ease of getting tattoos stop you from making a thoughtful decision about permanent body art. Before you get a tattoo, make sure you know what's involved. Also, be certain that tattooing is the right decision for you.

In Wisconsin, tattooing is regulated under Wisconsin Department of Health and Family. Tattooing facilities are inspected yearly and in some cases more often. State law requires tattoo artists to be licensed. They are also educated about how HIV is transmitted and take precautions to prevent transmission of HIV and other blood borne infections in their establishments. If you are considering getting a tattoo, ask the staff at the establishment what procedures they use to prevent the spread of HIV and other blood borne infections such as the Hepatitis B and C viruses. In addition, ask the tattoo artist if s/he uses antiseptic techniques, keeps permanent individual records, and uses sterile tools and equipment because those items are required under state law. Above all, make sure the tattoo artist uses fresh, sterile needles for each color and/or design.

Avoid unlicensed individuals and “home tattoo parties”. Recently there has been a rise in both areas of tattooing however, this cheaper option of tattooing may be dangerous to your health and cost more in the end due to potential hazards associated with these options. These include the possible transmission of diseases like hepatitis, tuberculosis, tetanus and possibly HIV. The Mayo Clinic states besides disease transmission, skin infections, allergic reactions, other skin problems such as granulomas and keloids may occur.

The bottom line is “think before you ink”, do your research and if you decide to get a tattoo, make it a healthy one.