

Chief Health Officer Advisory

29 August 2014

Status: Active

Tattoo ink and needle safety warning

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Date issued: 29 August 2014
Issued by: Dr Rosemary Lester Chief Health Officer, Victoria
Issued to: All premises conducting tattooing

Key messages

- This advisory does not refer to a current Australian product recall and is for information only.
- The US Food and Drug Administration have announced a Voluntary Nationwide Recall of tattoo ink, tattoo needles, tattoo kits due to microbial contamination. White & Blue Lion, Inc. is recalling products due to bacterial contamination. Use of these products may cause serious infection and can lead to sepsis, a potentially life-threatening complication of an infection.
- All premises conducting tattooing are advised to be aware of the US recall of tattoo ink, tattoo needles, tubes, ink cups and kits distributed by White & Blue Lion and ensure that they are not using these products.

What is the issue?

White & Blue Lion, Inc. in the City of Industry, CA is recalling tattoo inks, tattoo needles and tattoo kits due to bacterial contamination. US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Laboratory testing has found bacterial contamination in both the inks and needles.

Use of these products may cause serious infection and can lead to sepsis, a potentially life-threatening complication of an infection. The recall includes all tattoo ink, tattoo needles, tubes, ink cups and kits distributed by White & Blue Lion. Refer to table 1 on the following page.

The inks and needles are sold in tattoo kits and the inks are also sold separately by 8Decades and White & Blue Lion, Inc. through www.amazon.com & www.ebay.com

There has been one reported case of illness overseas.

Table 1: White & Blue Lion, Inc recalled products

| Tattoo inks (sold in kits and separately) | Brand | Code | Size |
|--|---|---|-------------|
| All colours | Multi colored Chinese Dragon Image with black and white lettering | Lot No. OR20036 Batch #8 Best if used by 16/12/16 | 5 ml bottle |

| Tattoo needles(included in kits) | Brand | Codes | Lot no. | Expiration |
|---|---|---|--|-------------------|
| Individually packaged in groups of 5 | None – labelled as “CE0197 Pre-made tattoo needle” “sterilized by E.O. Gas” | Art No. 1203RL, 1205M, 1205RL, 1205RS, 1209RL, 1207RL, 1207M, 1207RS, 1209M, 1209RS | 201308, 201307, 201312, 201402, 201311, 201310 | JUN2018 |

Who is at risk?

There may be a health risk for individuals receiving tattoos with these products.

Prevention

For tattoo premises:

All premises conducting tattooing are advised to be aware of the FDA US recall of tattoo ink, tattoo needles, tubes, ink cups and kits distributed by White & Blue Lion and ensure that they are not using these products.

Tattoo premises are reminded that it is the responsibility of premises to ensure that they request a product quality data sheet (certificates of analysis or an equivalent statement) when purchasing inks from suppliers or directly from manufacturers to confirm that the product is safe and legal for use in Victoria.

Under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 there is a requirement for all businesses involving tattooing to be registered with the local Council. The Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009 set out the requirements that proprietors or occupiers of premises registered under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 must observe. These include premises cleanliness and infection prevention and control measures for staff and equipment used.

For consumers:

Getting any tattoo carries some health risks. The safest way to get tattoos is from professional tattoo premises that are registered with your local council in Australia. Avoid getting tattoos overseas, particularly in Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe and South America.

More information

Industry information

For more information on the US FDA Voluntary Nationwide Recall of tattoo ink, tattoo needles and tattoo kits due to microbial contamination, visit <http://www.fda.gov/Safety/Recalls/ucm405474.htm>

- Photo: [Product Labels](#)
- Recalled Product Photos Are Also Available on FDA's [Flickr Photostream](#).
- [Related press release](#) (previously posted)

For more information on Victorian tattooing legislation and health guidelines visit Department of Health's website at <http://ideas.health.vic.gov.au/guidelines/tattooing.asp>

Consumer information

Information for consumers on tattooing is available on the Better Health Channel at: <http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/Tattoos>

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Rosemary Lester', enclosed within a thin rectangular border.

Dr Rosemary Lester PSM

Chief Health Officer

Authorised by the Victorian Government, Melbourne.