



Breast Reconstruction: Nipple-Areola Micropigmentation (Tattooing) Pre Procedure Information Sheet

What is nipple-areola micropigmentation:

Micropigmentation involves the permanent marking of the skin (intra-dermal) with colour pigments (cosmetic tattoo). Depending on the type of breast reconstruction a person has, the pigment is applied either to the skin of the breast mound to create the appearance of a nipple/ areola, or to the reconstructed nipple/ areola and closely matched to the other breast or natural colouring. Many women find that this improves the aesthetic appearance of the breast following reconstruction.

The colour pigment is applied using a special tattooing needle through a series of injections into the selected area. All equipment used is sterile and a new sterile needle is used for each procedure.

Pre-procedure:

An appointment will be booked for you through Dr. Taylor's office. Please notify Dr Taylor's office or the Breast Health Centre as soon as possible if you are unable to keep your appointment. The day of your procedure go to the Breast Health Centre at VGH.

While this is a minimally invasive procedure, patients may prefer to have someone drive them to and from the appointment. It is also advised that patients:

- Refrain from the use of **alcohol, aspirin, aspirin-containing medications, Coumadin, or Vit E** for at least **7 days prior to the procedure**, as these can cause you to bleed during the procedure which can disrupt the final outcome.
- **PLEASE CONSULT WITH YOUR PHYSICIAN BEFORE STOPPING ANY MEDICATIONS.**

Day of procedure:

A nurse trained and experienced with micro pigmentation will carry out the procedure, in consultation with your plastic surgeon in the hospital outpatient clinic setting. The nurse will collect a brief medical history, confirm allergies, and have you sign a consent form.

During the consultation you will be asked to stand in front of a mirror in order to select and mark the area of the breast that will be tattooed. Colour pigment selection will also occur at this time, if not previously decided.

You may purchase Emla cream over the counter at any pharmacy if you want to use a topical freezing. Apply it approx. 2 hours before the procedure and cover the area with the clear dressing provided. The procedure time can take between 30 – 60 minutes per breast site (including colour selection and skin marking).



<p style="text-align: center;">Breast Reconstruction: Nipple-Areola Micropigmentation (Tattooing) Post Procedure Information Sheet</p>
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Post-procedure:

Once the procedure is completed, the nurse will apply an antibiotic ointment and occlusive sterile dressing over the tattooed area.

Leave the dressing on for 4 days. You may shower and pat your dressing dry. You may see some discolouring on the gauze under the clear dressing; this is most likely the pigment on the skin mixing with the ointment. **DO NOT** be alarmed.

Remove your dressing on _____. When you remove the dressing you may shower but do not scrub or use anything abrasive on the area. Allow the area to air dry or pat gently to dry. Nivea cream or another heavy non-scented cream should be applied with a cotton swab to the area **2 times daily** for **2 weeks**. (Do not touch the area directly with your fingers until it is completely healed to avoid infection). The area should be healed within 7 – 10 days.

You may experience some tenderness/ soreness to the area following the procedure. This can be relieved by regular or extra-strength Tylenol, or as advised.

It is normal to expect some temporary inflammation around the tattooed area for the first day or so. As part of the healing process the skin that is tattooed crusts slightly and some peeling of the skin is normal. **Do not pick at the flakes of skin**, let them slough off naturally or this can peel away the colour, cause irregular pigmentation, or infection.

To avoid infection and excessive pigment fading, avoid swimming, hot tubs, or soaking in the bath until completely healed (no scabbing); approx. 2 weeks. Natural sun and/or sun lamps (tanning beds) will also fade your tattooed area. You should cover your tattoo if you are using a sun lamp.

Your tattoo colour is expected to fade by approximately 30% over the next few months due to the natural healing process and sloughing off of the skin, and may even appear slightly uneven. In about 3 months you should have your final result. It is not uncommon to have touch-up colouring at a follow-up visit.

If you experience any increased breast redness, tenderness, or any other concerns, please contact the Breast Health Centre at 727-4467.