



## Renfrew County and District Health Unit

*"Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"*

### **Raglan Street South Home-Based Tattoo Operation IPAC Lapse Questions and Answers**

#### **Background**

Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU) is advising anyone who received a tattoo from a home-based operation on Raglan Street South in Renfrew Ontario to be tested, as a precaution, for bloodborne infections.

#### **What personal service is being investigated?**

The investigation is related to a home-based tattooing service in a private residence located on Raglan Street South in Renfrew Ontario

#### **What is the issue and when was it discovered?**

On January 13, 2019, RCDHU received a complaint regarding a possible uninspected tattooing service on Raglan Street South. The investigation began on January 15 and an onsite inspection was conducted on January 16. It was determined that the home-based operator was not cleaning and disinfecting the tattooing equipment properly or keeping appropriate client records. An order under the Health Protection and Promotion Act was issued to the operator to stop tattooing immediately and remain stopped until the tattoo service meets provincial infection prevention and control (IPAC) standards and is approved by RCDHU.

#### **Is the tattooing service operating today?**

No. RCDHU must inspect the home-based operation and give approval before the operator can tattoo once again.

#### **What are IPAC standards?**

IPAC standards are "infection prevention and control" guidelines to prevent infections. An IPAC lapse occurs when infection prevention and control standards (such as proper cleaning, disinfection, sterilization, and storage of re-usable equipment) are not followed, putting client at risk of bloodborne infections.

#### **Have there been any cases of infection related to this home-based tattoo operation?**

RCDHU is currently not aware of any cases of infection related to the tattooing service on Raglan Street South in Renfrew.

#### **Why is RCDHU recommending I see a health care provider to discuss testing for hepatitis B (HBV), hepatitis C (HCV) and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)?**

The RCDHU public health inspector observed infection control lapses at the Raglan Street South location in Renfrew, specifically improper disinfection and storage of

tattooing equipment and possible cross contamination of tattooing ink. These practices carry a low risk of transmitting infectious diseases, such as HBV, HCV and, to a lesser extent, HIV. Although the risk of bloodborne infections is low, as a precaution, RCDHU recommends that all clients that have received a tattoo at the home-based location on Raglan Street South in Renfrew contact a health care provider (doctor, nurse practitioner or walk-in clinic) to discuss testing.

### **What are bloodborne infections?**

Bloodborne infections (BBIs) are caused by viruses that are carried in the blood and can cause illness in people. They can be transmitted through contact with blood and other bodily fluids. In tattoo operations, bloodborne viruses may be transmitted through unclean or inadequately disinfected equipment that come in contact with blood from the client being tattooed.

### **What should people who were tattooed at the home-based operation on Raglan Street South location tell their doctor?**

Clients who received a tattoo there should take these questions and answers to their doctor to discuss getting tested for HBV, HCV and HIV. Health care providers can call RCDHU at 613-735-8654 extension 555 as well.

### **What does the testing involve?**

Blood samples are collected and sent to a laboratory for analysis. The tests are free for Ontario residents and covered by the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP).

### **Should my partner or other family members be tested?**

Only clients who received a tattoo are advised to discuss testing with their doctor. The risk of disease from this situation is low. Discussing testing with a doctor is being recommended as a precaution.

### **I am already vaccinated for hepatitis B, should I still see my doctor?**

Yes. RCDHU recommends that all clients see their doctor, even if they have been vaccinated against hepatitis B. This is because there is a risk of transmission of other bloodborne diseases, including hepatitis C, and to a lesser extent HIV.

### **When will my test results be available and where can I get them?**

Test results will be sent back to your family doctor or other ordering physician (e.g., walk-in clinic doctor) within two weeks of being submitted. Your health care provider can provide information about how to follow up on your results and any further testing or treatment that you may require.

### **If a test result is positive, what are the next steps?**

Your health care provider will receive all test results and will contact you if results are positive for any illness. Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV are all reportable diseases. All positive tests will also be reported to RCDHU and a public health nurse will contact you for recommended follow-up.

**I am positive for HBV or HCV or HIV. Does this mean I got the infection from my tattoo that I received at the home-based operation on Raglan Street South, Renfrew?**

There are many ways that these infections can be transmitted through contact with blood and other bodily fluids. If you were diagnosed and are concerned that you may have been infected from the tattoo procedure at this location, speak with your health care provider. There may be some additional tests that can be attempted to investigate the source of infection.

**Where can I learn more about hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV?**

Visit [www.rcdhu.com](http://www.rcdhu.com) for more information or call RCDHU at 613-735-8654 extension 555 to speak with a public health nurse.