

# REMOVING TATTOOS

a technique

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In 1974 an article appeared in Modern Medicine of Australia describing the salabrasion technique of tattoo removal. Since that time I have removed some hundred odd tattoos of varying sizes and situations from young adolescent girls. The criteria before commencing such a procedure should be clearly defined and in my case the girl is assessed to establish her readiness and degree of desire for removal.

Threshold of pain is important and this is largely determined by the former. Parental permission if the girl is under sixteen is desirable although not compulsory.

## TECHNIQUE

I have developed some refinements of the technique which may be of interest. Firstly the most successful results have been obtained on upper and lower arms and backs. The area is shaved and salabrasion commenced with a mixture of pure Hibitane and cooking salt. The length of time to penetrate the dermis varies in each case but twenty minutes is average. Once the area has become 'blood red' a certain amount of anaesthesia has taken place. It is then possible to go over the outline with a pointed scalpel. This creates better scar formation and therefore better separation. When the process is complete the area is cleansed with Hibitane solution and covered with a salt and Hibitane pack. It is bandaged and the affected limb put in a sling and is left for four days. Primary separation occurs about the tenth

day and secondary separation in three weeks.

## ANALGESIA

Some analgesia is usually necessary prior to commencement of treatment and our standard procedure has been two Veganin or Digesic plus 5 mgs. of Valium.

This procedure has been most satisfactory with home made and small professional tattoos, the latter probably due to the even depth. Should any ink remain the process can be repeated in six to eight weeks.

## PLASTIC SURGERY

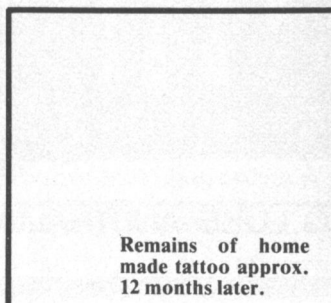
This is only intended as an alternative to plastic surgery which is costly, entails lengthy waiting periods for admission to public hospitals and **never** leaves the scarring of a bad skin graft.

## DOCUMENTATION

Unfortunately documentation is difficult without a clinical camera and also because most girls are only in Winlaton for six to eight weeks. It would be desirable to have a six month follow up photograph.



Photo of skin graft 6 months after.



Remains of home made tattoo approx. 12 months later.