

Reconstructed Nipple Areola Tattoo

Department of Plastic Surgery
Division of Surgery



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The purpose of this leaflet is to explain the procedure of Reconstructed Nipple Areola Tattoo.

Before the procedure

You may bath / shower before the procedure, but please do not apply body lotion or deodorant around the area to be tattooed.

It is also advisable not to wear any necklaces, as they may get in the way.

The procedure usually takes around 40 minutes and the tattoo itself around 15 minutes. This procedure is carried out at the Vicki Adkins Breast Unit at the QEII Hospital.

When you arrive at the Unit

When you arrive at the unit, please report to the reception desk then take a seat in the waiting area.

The nurse will call you when the doctor is ready for you.

You will be asked to sit at the desk and your details will be checked. You may ask any questions or talk about any concerns you have regarding the procedure.

When you are ready the nurse will take you behind the curtain, you will then be asked to remove the clothes from your top half and will be given a front opening gown. You will then be asked to sit on the edge of the couch.

During the procedure

The doctor will then mark up the position of the new nipple / areola. Once you are happy you will be asked to lie on the couch.

The pigment is then matched to the other nipple by wiping a small amount of the pigment with a cotton bud near the area to be tattooed, if you have lost both nipples / areolas you may choose a colour you prefer (we can help you with this process).

We will show you in a mirror what the colour chosen looks like and once you are happy will ask you to lie back on the couch.

A bright light will be shone onto the area to be tattooed and the area will be cleaned with a mild antiseptic solution.

You may be given a local anaesthetic to the area to be tattooed if it is not already numb from previous surgery.

The anaesthetic also helps to

The tattoo machine will make a slight buzzing noise once it is in use. You should not feel any pain, only slight pressure.

From time to time the area is wiped with a sterile swab to check how the pigment is taking. When the tattoo is completed we will show you in a mirror. A light dressing is applied after which you may get dressed.

Post tattoo advice

We will give you a prescription for an ointment that you must use twice a day after the dressing comes off, two days after the procedure. Please keep the area clean and dry. The area may scab over after a few days, this is normal, please do not pick the scabs off.

An outpatient follow up appointment will be sent to you in the post.

If the area becomes very red, hot to touch or starts oozing, please do not hesitate to call our Dressing Clinic for advice on 01438 314333 (extension 4767) or direct line 01438 781848 8:00 am to 4:00 pm.



The photograph above shows a nipple tattoo on a reconstructed breast.

Risks

- In time the colour may fade
- In time the tattoo may have to be redone
- Surgical site infection can occur after any surgical procedure. There is a patient information leaflet about surgical site infection and what is done to reduce this risk

Benefits

- Gives a good appearance to reconstructed breast / nipple
- May help to increase your confidence regarding body image and femininity

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