

Plastic Surgery
Wexham Park and
King Edward VII Hospitals

Micropigmentation of Breast and After Care

Micro-pigmentation Areola Clinic

This service is offered as the final stage of the breast reconstruction pathway following a cancer diagnosis. This **is not a cosmetic procedure**

About your treatment

Following nipple reconstruction, we can tattoo colour onto your nipple and the surrounding skin to give it a realistic appearance following your surgery. For this treatment to be carried out, your consultant must refer you by letter. The specialist will follow through with your care. Please read all the information given to you carefully and let us know if you have any concerns

Valuable information: Before your procedure

- It is important you have a good understanding of the procedure
- Advise your Specialist if you suffer from any of the following: psoriasis, hyper pigmentation, scars, keloid scarring, vitiligo, allergies.
- The treatment cannot be carried out under any circumstances if you are pregnant
- A Patch Test may be requested 24 hours prior to treatment; the results can be inconclusive, however, if you are prone to reactions and feel safer to have one, this can be organised. We will review the patch site after 14 days.
- You will be required to complete a consent form on the day of your treatment.
- You will be given an information leaflet as a part of your informed consent.

Allergy to tattoo dyes

The dyes used are very safe and an allergic reaction is rare. Testing for allergies is not helpful as it can take years to manifest itself.

Nickel

Traces of nickel may be present in the needles.

Laser

Laser hair removal should not be undertaken **BEFORE** a micro pigmentation procedure as it can cause the area to go black.

Important information: Your procedure

- Micro pigmentation can add colour to the area where it is missing.
- This is a multi-treatment procedure and may require further sessions to get the desired results; this is a matter of patient choice.
- The tattoo colour is applied with a small electric machine which holds needles that punch tiny holes in the surface of the skin.
- The procedure is done using sterile products in a clean environment.
- The first procedure for a single tattoo will take about two and half hours. This will include
 - consultation
 - consent
 - photos before, midway and on completion
 - positioning of areola
 - mixing and comparison of colours
 - application of local anaesthetic
 - and tattooing
- For patients requiring micro pigmentation after a double breast reconstruction the treatment can take anything up to 3-4 hours (this can vary depending on individual circumstances and choice).
- 30-45 minutes prior to the procedure the specialist will apply a local anaesthetic cream (EMLA) which will numb the area.
- A film dressing placed over the cream will hold it in the specific area required.
- Following a breast reconstruction, the area is likely to be numb; however, if you do have any sensation, the cream will help alleviate any undue discomfort.
- If you require a further session this is normally done 6-8 weeks following the initial procedure. We will automatically send you another appointment. If you do not need any further treatment, please let the specialist know in advance so that the appointment can be given to another patient.
- Infection is a potential complication of any invasive procedure; this is a rare occurrence with this type of a tattoo.
- You will be given an after-care advice leaflet on how to look after the tattooed area.

Valuable information: After care

Sun

It is best to avoid prolonged sun exposure as this can trigger allergies and can sometimes cause the tattoo to change colour.

MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) Scans

Micro pigmentation can show up as an artefact on the scan. Some patients may experience a tingling sensation. Please notify the Radiologist.

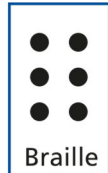
To achieve the best results possible, please follow these instructions

- Leave your dressing on for 48hrs.
- Please make sure that you do not knock the pigmented area.
- You can have a shower the following day; please remove dressing before and apply a fresh piece of gauze afterwards.
- We advise you to refrain from swimming, sauna, gym, and vigorous exercise for two weeks.
- We will give you some Chloramphenicol ointment, or you can use Vaseline if you prefer.
- Please apply this sparingly to the area for the first 72 hrs.
- You will notice some crusting and scab formation; this is normal.
- The pigment will slough away in 4-7 days. You will then see a lighter, truer colour.
- Do not pick at the area; this may cause bleeding and scarring.
- We will give you some gauze to line the tattooed area to prevent any rubbing or friction. Please use for 7 days following the treatment.

Contact numbers

Kamal Paul, Clinical Lead Nurse for Plastics and Breast	0300 615 3031
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For a translation of this leaflet or for accessing this information in another format:



Please contact (PALS) the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on:

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Legal Notice

Please remember that this leaflet is intended as general information only. We aim to make the information as up to date and accurate as possible. Please therefore always check specific advice or any concerns you may have with your doctor.

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