

A mark to remember

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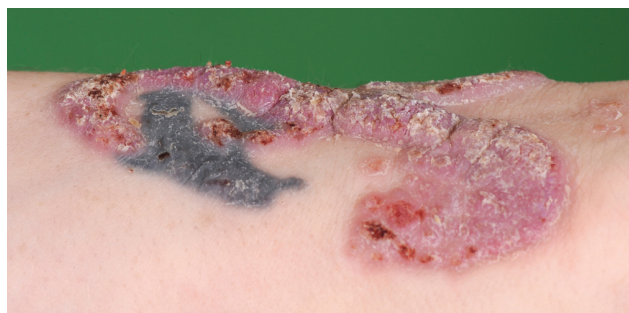
A 40-year-old female presented with rash over a new tattoo inked 6 months previously. Three weeks after the tattoo was inked, she described an intense itch initially along the line of the purple 'Alzheimer's Awareness Ribbon' tattoo ink. On examination of the left wrist, there is a significant well-defined, erythematous, scaly, indurated plaque along the line of tattooing (Figures 1 and 2).

A second tattoo was inked at same time but in different coloured ink, however, there had been no adverse reaction with this one. She has had ten previous tattoos with no adverse reactions.

There was minimal response to topical steroids under occlusion. She subsequently underwent laser therapy (Q-Switched 532 laser) with good response and reports reluctance for any other tattooing in the future.

In a recent self-report study cutaneous tattoo reactions have been reported in up to 42% of tattoos inked.¹ In this described case, there was a significant reaction selective to purple ink. Other reports of tattoo reactions, both self-reported reaction and those presenting to healthcare settings, have described selectivity to a specific colour of ink ranging from 6% up to 52% of cases.^{1,2} Recent publications have implicated red ink as a frequent culprit, often accounting for 42–52% of cases.^{2,3} This case highlights that despite tattoos being common place in today's society they may leave a more memorable mark than first intended, with complications presenting to healthcare settings. **1**

Figures 1 and 2 A well circumscribed, indurated, scaly, erythematous reaction is seen in areas inked with purple colour, with adjacent black ink unaffected



References

- 1 Kluger N. Self-reported tattoo reactions in a cohort of 448 French tattooists. *Int J Dermatol* 2016; 55: 764–8.
- 2 Brady BG, Gold H, Leger EA et al. Self-reported adverse tattoo reactions: a New York City Central Park study. *Contact Dermatitis* 2015; 73: 91–9.
- 3 Kluger N. Cutaneous complications related to tattoos: 31 cases from Finland. *Dermatology* 2017; 233: 100–9.

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