

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS
State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

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Contact: DOH Communications
(850) 245-4111

THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH URGES RESIDENTS, VISITORS TO BE AWARE OF DANGEROUS BLACK HENNA TATTOOS

TALLAHASSEE – The Florida Department of Health would like to warn residents and visitors of the potential health hazards associated with “black henna” tattoos. Unlike natural brown henna tattoos, which use dried ground henna leaves to create a temporary tattoo, the unsafe and unnatural black henna paste produces a black design because para-phenylenediamine (PPD), a toxic chemical which is exempt from approval by the FDA and is included in small amounts in black hair dye, has been added to the paste.

“It is important to make residents and visitors alike aware of the possible health risks associated with black henna tattoos,” said Dr. Celeste Philip, Deputy Secretary for Health and Deputy State Health Officer for Children’s Medical Services. “Before having a henna tattoo applied to your skin or your child’s skin, ask to see the ingredients of the paste. Natural brown henna tattoo paste should only contain ground henna leaves, lemon or grapefruit juice and possibly botanical oil.”

The addition of PPD in black henna paste dyes the skin quicker and makes the tattoo look more like a permanent tattoo. The PPD found in “black henna” tattoos makes them unsafe and has been known to produce serious adverse health effects in children and adults. The general progression of symptoms is itching or burning; blistering; oozing; scab formation; and unfortunately, in some cases, permanent scarring in the shape of the tattoo design. Symptoms may occur within a few hours or up to a few weeks after receiving a “black henna” tattoo, depending upon the concentration of PPD in the paste and the severity of an individual’s allergy to PPD.

Medical attention should be sought immediately upon any symptoms of an allergic reaction. In addition to seeking medical attention, allergic reactions should be reported electronically to the department on the Injury Report Form found on the department web site at: <http://www.floridahealth.gov/healthy-environments/tattooing/black-henna1.html>

The Department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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