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### THE KOREAN TATTOOIST SURVEY: A WEB-BASED SURVEY

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**Aim:** In Korea, only physicians are allowed to give tattoos. However, most decorative tattoos are performed by tattooists. We aimed to study the actual state of the tattoo practice in Korea.

**Method:** We performed an anonymous internet survey in Korea. The participants were the members of Korea Tattoo Artist Association (KTAA) and the Korea Tattoo Association (KTA).

**Results / Discussion:** A total of 1,004 tattooists participated, 527 completed the survey. The mean age of the tattooists were 31, including 426 men and 111 women. Out of the respondents, 476 respondents replied that they practice tattoo, and 375 (76.6%) tattooists were currently operating his/her own tattoo parlor. The other tattooists in practice performed tattoo free-lancer tattooists in a tattoo parlor or at home. The requisites for safe tattoo practice were the introduction of a tattooist license (33.9%), the formulation of safety regulations (27.2%), provision of sanitary training courses for tattooist (14.9%). The tattooing needle used in tattoo practice should be treated as health-care waste, however 47.7% of tattooists responded that needles were treated as general waste after use. We asked the complaints of customers including health problems, but most of tattooists replied that there were "no" complaints to be reported. Our results revealed that Korean tattooists are defensive about reporting customers' complaints and tattoo-related health problems.

**Conclusion:** The tattoo safety management regulations are required for minimizing adverse events including sanitary training for tattooist, adequate waste disposals procedures.