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### INTRODUCTION OF DERMATOME SHAVING OF TATTOO REACTIONS, RATIONALE, TECHNIQUE AND REACTIONS

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**Aim:** To present surgical ways to remove hazardous reactive pigments from human tattoos, in a manner who permits epithelialisation from the surface within fourteen days. And in the same procedure secure material for identification of the nature of the pigments.

**Methods:** Our technique is founded in the surgical wound healing: After excision of the ulcer, the defect is covered with a split skin. This spit skin, about 1 third millimeter of thickness, is harvested with a dermatome from an appropriate place at the body, the donor site. The different dermatomes can be adjusted for a deeper skin harvest or for necrectomy. This possibility is utilized in combination with a stage technique, when we step for step remove all visible reactive pigments. The intention is not to penetrate into the sub cutis by this surgical procedure.

The surgery is performed with highly aseptic technique and in infiltration anaesthesia. The dressing takes into consideration modern moist wound healing, and is left in situ for eight days. The patient is discharged from the Wound Healing Centre after a short period of observation for follow up in the Tattoo Clinic.

**Experience:** To day more than sixty procedures have been done at the Wound Healing Centre. Challenge has been the handling of the patients. Some are rather immature. The character of the reactive skin is different. Some are hard fibrous. Sometimes the pigment has been deposit very deep and near the sub cutis. Sometimes it is very difficult to distinguish red pigment from blood. The inflammatory reactions in the tissue can be so strong that it is difficult to cover the field with anaesthesia.

The preferred knives are the classic Humphy-Watson dermatome and a special flexible short knife. Some experience is needed.

Other devices are in a test mode.