

99629 - Are Temporary Tattoos Haram?

the question

Having a permanent tattoo is islamically haram because it harms the body. Instead of it we can use henna, but it's problem is that it is not accurately drawn mostly, and it also stays for a long time.

Now there is a new type of tattoo known as "sticking tattoo" used instead of the permanent tattoo and henna. It is to be used for one night and it can be easily and immediately removed leaving no signs behind. What is the ruling on this new type of tattoo?

Summary of answer

Temporary tattoos come under the same ruling as dyeing with henna, if they are done in the manner mentioned in the question and not in the way that is forbidden.

Detailed answer

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Firstly:

Difference between permanent adornment and temporary adornment

There is a difference between permanent adornment which changes the colour or shape of part of the body, and temporary adornment. The former is haram and is changing the creation of Allah, and the latter is permissible.

What is tattooing?

Tattooing means changing the colour of the skin, by inserting a needle in the skin until blood flows, then injecting kohl or something else into that place so that the skin takes on a colour other than that which Allah created.

Is dyeing with henna haram?

Dyeing with henna and the like does not come under this heading. It does not change the colour of the skin, rather it is drawing and decoration and colours that disappear after a while.

Allah has permitted women to adorn themselves in this manner on condition that the drawings do not represent animate beings such as humans or animals, and that she does not show this adornment before non-mahram men.

Types of tattoos

There are three types of permanent tattoos in general, all of which come under the same ruling, which is that it is haram. These types are:

1. The ancient traditional manner, which is what we mentioned above, where a needle is inserted into the skin and blood is made to flow, then the place is filled with kohl or some other dye.

Al-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“Washimah refers to the one who does tattoos (washm), which means inserting a needle or the like in the back of the hand, wrist or lip, or elsewhere on the woman’s body until the blood flows, then that place is filled with kohl and it turns blue. That may be done with

circles and decorations, and it may be a lot or a little. The woman who does this is called washimah and the one to whom it is done is called mawshumah, and if she asks for that to be done she is called mustawshimah. This is haram for the one who does it and the one to whom it is done by her choice and at her request.” (Sharh al-Nawawi ‘ala Muslim, 14/106)

For the evidence and the comments of the scholars on this issue, please see the answer to question no. [21119](#) .

2. Using chemicals or doing a surgical procedure to change the colour of the entire skin or part of it.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Salih al-‘Uthaymin (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked:

Some people – especially women – use some chemical substances and natural herbs to change the colour of the skin, so that after using these chemicals and natural herbs for a while, dark skin becomes white and so on. Are there any shar’i reservations concerning this? Please note that some husbands order their wives to use these chemicals or herbs on the basis that the wife has to adorn herself for her husband.

He replied:

“If this change is permanent then it is haram and is a major sin, because it is a worse change in the creation of Allah than tattooing. It is proven that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) cursed the woman who does hair extensions and the woman who has that done, and the woman who does tattoos and the woman who has them done. In al-Sahihayn it is narrated that ‘Abd-Allah ibn Mas’ud (may Allah be pleased with him) said: May Allah curse the women who do tattoos and the women who have them done, and the women who pluck eyebrows and the women who have that done, and the women who file their teeth for the purpose of beautification, those who change the creation of Allah. And he said: Why should I not curse those whom the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) cursed?

The one who does hair extensions means the one who has short hair, and she adds something to it, whether it is hair or something that resembles hair.

The one who asks for hair extensions to be done is the one who asks for that to be added to her hair.

The woman who does tattoos is the one who puts the tattoo on the skin by inserting a needle and the like, then fills that place with kohl or something similar which changes the colour of the skin.

The woman who asks for tattoos to be done is the one who asks someone to do a tattoo for her.

The woman who [plucks eyebrows](#) means the one who plucks hair from the face, from the eyebrows or elsewhere, for herself or for someone else.

The woman who asks for that to be done is the one who asks for her eyebrows to be plucked.

The woman who files her teeth is the one who asks someone to file her teeth so as to widen the gaps between them. All of these things are changing the creation of Allah.

What is mentioned in the question is worse in terms of changing the creation of Allah than that which is mentioned in the hadith.” (Majmu’ Fatawa al-Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymin, 17/ answer to question no. 4)

Please see the answer to question no. [2895](#) for more information on this topic.

3. Temporary tattoos which may last for up to a year.

Shaykh ‘Abd-Allah ibn Jibrin (may Allah preserve him) was asked:

Recently there has appeared a new way of using kohl and outlining the lips by using a temporary tattoo which lasts for six months or a year, instead of using regular kohl and lip outliner pencils. What is the ruling on that?

He replied:

“That is not permissible because it comes under the heading of tattooing, and the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) cursed the woman who does tattoos and the woman who asks for that to be done. This outlining of the lips and eyes remains for a year or half a year, then it is done again when it fades and remains for a similar length of time, so it is similar to the tattooing that is haram.

The basic principle is that kohl is a remedy for the eyes, and its colour is black or grey; it is applied to the lashes and eyelids when there is a disorder in the eye, or in order to protect the eye from disease, and it may be a beauty and adornment for women, as a permissible kind of adornment. As for outlining the lips with a temporary tattoo, I think that it is not permissible, and women should keep away from doubtful matters.

And Allah knows best. May Allah send blessings and peace upon Muhammad and his family and Companions.” (From a fatwa on which is his signature)

Ruling on temporary tattoos

What we think with regard to temporary tattoos is that they come under the same ruling as dyeing with henna, if they are done in the manner mentioned in the question and not in the way that is forbidden.

Conditions of allowing temporary tattoos

This permissibility is subject to several conditions:

1. That the drawing should be temporary and will disappear, and not permanent
2. She should not put any drawings of animate beings
3. She should not appear with that adornment before non-mahram men
4. Those colours and dyes should not be harmful to the skin
5. There should be no resemblance to immoral or kafir women

6. She should not put any drawings of symbols that venerate deviant religions, corrupt beliefs or misguided ways
7. If it is done by someone else, it should be another woman and it should not be put on any place that is 'awrah.

If these conditions are met, we do not see any reason why she should not adorn herself with it.

Al-San'ani (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“Some ahadith give the reason for tattooing being haram as being because it is changing the creation of Allah, but it is not said that dyeing with henna and the like comes under this heading, and even if it does come under this heading, it is exempted according to scholarly consensus and because it happened at the time of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).” (Subul al-Salam, 1/150)

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Salih al-'Uthaymin (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked:

It has become common among people – especially women – to use some chemicals and natural herbs that change the colour of the skin ... we have quoted the question above.

He replied:

“What is mentioned in the question is worse in terms of changing the creation of Allah than that which is mentioned in the hadith.

But if the change is not permanent, such as henna and the like, there is nothing wrong with it, because it will disappear, so it is like kohl, blusher and lipstick. What must be avoided is that which changes the creation of Allah and this warning should be spread among the ummah so that the evil will not spread and become difficult to change.” (Majmu' Fatawa al-Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymin, 17/answer to question no. 4)

We have quoted the Shaykh as saying in his fatwa that it is permissible so long as the drawings do not include images of animate beings. Please see the answer to question

no. [8904](#) .

Some doctors have warned about the medical harm that is caused by these temporary tattoos.

It says in the Saudi newspaper al-Yawm:

“Temporary tattoos are increasingly popular among girls of various ages, especially on ‘Eids and during school holidays.

Dr. Usamah Baghdadi, a specialist in skin diseases, has warned against getting carried away with these stickers which lead to disfigurement of the body and lead to many skin diseases in accordance with the amount of glue that is used, which may pass through the skin and enter the bloodstream, and the chemicals used for colouring also have a negative effect on overall health.” (Issue no. 11,159, thirty-ninth year, Saturday 11/11/1424 AH — 3/1/2004 CE)

If it is proven that this method is harmful and that it leads to skin diseases or other kinds of sickness, then it is forbidden according to shari’ah, because the Muslim may not do anything that will harm himself or others. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “There should be neither harming nor reciprocating harm.” (Narrated by Ibn Majah (784); classed as sahih by al-Albani in Irwa al-Ghalil.)

And Allah knows best.