Infectious Diseases
HIV and Hepatitis

The Council also produces information leaflets on the following associated subjects:

- Tattooing
- Electrolysis
- Ear Piercing
- Acupuncture

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### Hepatitis B

Hepatitis B is an infection caused by a virus which can be carried in all body fluids, including blood, and which affects the liver.

The virus enters the body when infected body fluids from one person enter the body of another.

The infection affects people in three different ways:

**Acute Hepatitis B**

Early symptoms appear between 4 and 6 months after infection. They include mild flu-like illness or maybe tiredness, nausea, loss of appetite, dislike of smoking and alcohol. Abdominal pain and yellow skin and eyes (known as jaundice) may follow with dark urine and pale stools (faeces). You may be unwell for several months.

**Chronic Hepatitis B**

After the acute illness some people are still affected by the virus.

**Carriers of Hepatitis B**

Some people, whether they have the acute illness or not will become carriers of the infection. They remain infectious to others but are symptom-free themselves.

### A.I.D.S

The Initials A.I.D.S. stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. It is caused by the human immunodeficiency virus - HIV, which attacks the body’s immune system so that it is unable to fight infections or diseases. Most people who have been infected with HIV can stay healthy for years, in fact, many of them may not know they are infected.

The A.I.D.S virus infection is spread almost entirely by sexual intercourse or the transfer of blood from an infected person to another.

No one has been known to catch the A.I.D.S virus from ear piercing, electrolysis, tattooing and acupuncture and no one should in future either if correct sterilisation and disinfection procedures are carried out.

### Precautions

When a needle breaks a persons skin, blood, serum or small fragments of tissue inevitably adhere to the needle or instrument used.

These can then be transferred to dyes (in tattooing), operators hands or other objects in the room. Other instruments, or cloth paper tissues that come into contact with the pierced skin, may also become contaminated. The next customer or patient may be infected through any of the contaminated objects.

Precautions against Hepatitis B virus will also protect against the HIV which is easily killed outside of the body.

Correct sterilisation and disinfection procedures are therefore essential.