

## 'BLACK HENNA' TEMPORARY TATTOO WARNING FOR CHILDREN & FESTIVAL-GOERS THIS SUMMER



This summer, the British Skin Foundation would like to warn the public of the dangers of so-called 'black henna' temporary tattoos (BHTTs). Research among dermatologists in 2015 revealed they are seeing an increase in reactions at their clinics across the UK.

Parents hoping to treat their children to a temporary tattoo this summer on holiday or at the funfair and party-goers at festivals, may not realise the dangers of BHTTs.

The majority of BHTTs are not based on henna at all, but a substance called para-phenylenediamine (PPD) which is found in hair dyes. PPD is allowed for use in hair dye, but its use for skin contact products such as temporary tattoos is illegal in the European Union.



When PPD is used on the skin in this way it can cause blistering, painful skin burns and may even lead to scarring. It can also leave the person with a lifelong sensitivity to PPD, which increases the risk of a severe allergic reaction when using hair dye in the future.

### Our survey found:

- 4 out of 10 dermatologists asked had seen patients with skin reactions to BHTTs.
- 1 in 20 dermatologists approached said that over 80% of the BHTT reactions they had seen were in children aged under 16.
- Dermatologists asked confirmed that around half of the patients got a BHTT outside of the EU, where the legal status of PPD is not always clear; however the other half got a BHTT within the EU, with 27% of these in the UK.
- About two-thirds of dermatologists approached have seen an increase in patients with reactions to hair dyes, many of whom have previously had a BHTT.

**Dr Anjali Mahto, Consultant Dermatologist & British Skin Foundation Spokesperson** reinforced the findings saying, *"Black henna is well known to cause skin reactions and should be treated with caution, particularly in children."*

The decision to issue this warning is backed by the **Cosmetic, Toiletry & Perfumery Association (CTPA)**. *"The message is clear: having a 'black henna' temporary tattoo presents a significant risk of a very nasty adverse reaction to the tattoo itself. It also increases the risk of either not being able to use most hair dyes in the future or having a bad reaction to them if the warnings are ignored. Most importantly, parents will want to safeguard their children this summer by steering clear of so-called 'black henna' temporary tattoos."* **Dr Christopher Flower, Director-General CTPA**

Join the discussion on Twitter [#AvoidBlackHenna](#)

## Press release

### Editors Notes:

The **British Skin Foundation** survey was undertaken at the [British Association of Dermatologists'](#) Annual Meeting between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> July 2015 in Manchester. Only dermatologists were invited to take part and were identified by their delegate badge. 244 completed the survey of which 56 were male and 188 female. The survey included questions from the British Skin Foundation, other companies as well as the **CTPA**. It was blind, unbranded (due to it being run on the British Skin Foundation stand) and respondents received no financial reward.

The [British Skin Foundation](#) is the only UK charity dedicated to raising funds for all skin diseases and skin cancer research. Find us online at [www.britishskinfoundation.org.uk](http://www.britishskinfoundation.org.uk) / [Twitter](#) / [Facebook](#)

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CTPA has a [Youtube video](#) highlighting BHTT case studies and [information on BHTTs](#) on its consumer website – [www.thefactsabout.co.uk](http://www.thefactsabout.co.uk) / [Twitter](#)