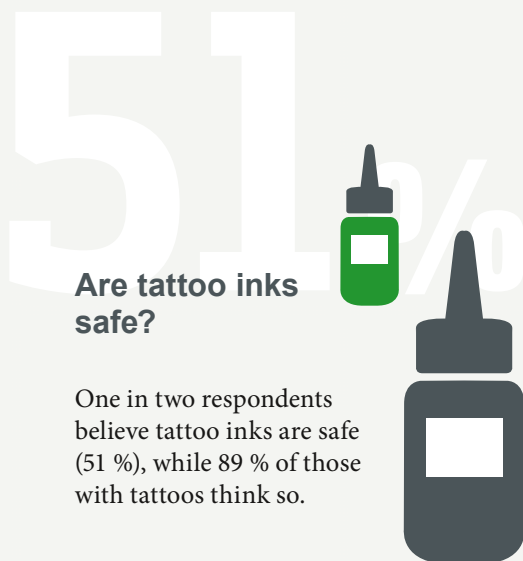


# After the tattoo is before the tattoo

Many people in Germany believe tattoos are safe – as shown by a representative study of the BfR on risk perception with regard to tattoos. This view is shared particularly frequently by people who already have tattoos. However, many tattoo inks have not been researched, and there are increasing signs that some substances may be problematic.



## Do tattoos pose a risk to health?

Many people are aware that tattoos can result in infections (91 %) or allergies (85 %), yet roughly half of the respondents view the health risk of tattoos as low overall. The figure is even higher among tattooed people (87 %). Roughly one in three respondents believe that the substances used in tattoo inks remain completely in the tattooed area, but there is scientific evidence that ink pigments can migrate from the tattoos into the lymphatic system.



**Underlying study:**  
representative telephone survey of 1,009 persons (German speaking population in private households above the age of 14) in July 2018

**More information:**  
BfR Consumer Monitor 2018, Special Tattoos  
[www.bfr.bund.de/en](http://www.bfr.bund.de/en) > Publications > Brochures > BfR Consumer Monitor

44%



### Tattoos – a topic in the media?

44 % say they have heard, seen or read something about tattoos in the media during the last 12 months. In addition to recalling general information, the respondents remember hearing about health risks, cover-up tattoos (new tattoos to cover old tattoos) and tattoos that went wrong (“horror tattoos”).

12%

### Tattoos are popular

Around one in eight respondents (12 %) already have or used to have a tattoo. Of these respondents, the number of women with tattoos significantly outnumbered the men. People who already have a tattoo are quite willing to have more tattoos: 54 % of the tattooed respondents said they would go under the needle once again. Only 7 % of those without tattoos said they would consider getting one.



### Laser removal a risk?

One in three respondents sees no health problems with the removal of tattoos using lasers. Tattooed people are more sceptical, as 47 % of them believe laser removal is unsafe.

47%

