



## Other products and processes

This eBooklet gives you facts about fake tans, tinting /dyeing hair, felt tip pens and medical tattooing. The aim is to help you decide whether these products and processes may be an option for you. For some people, they may be alternatives (or additions to) the camouflage products described in the eBooklet *Managing vitiligo – Skin camouflage*.

# Fake Tans

Fake tans change the colour of the outermost layer of the skin. They can be used instead of skin camouflage, or in addition to it, on different parts of the body.

## Advantages of fake tans:

- **They need to be applied less frequently than skin camouflage.** Fake tans usually last for about four to six days before they have to be reapplied.
- **They do not rub off** on clothing.
- They are very **useful for large areas of vitiligo** and can work on difficult areas where cosmetic camouflage is less effective, such as the back of the hands.
- They are **easily available** in supermarkets, chemists etc.

## Disadvantages of fake tans:

- Unlike skin camouflage, fake tans are **not usually able to provide a perfect match** with your own skin colour. You will need to be careful in selecting a suitable colour.
- They are **not available for all skin tones**. Unfortunately there is no fake tan yet to match dark brown or black skin. (We understand that suitable products are being developed though).

Fake tans are **not available on prescription**.

## **Applying fake tans yourself:**

Follow the instructions on the product, but in general the following steps will ensure that you get good results:

- If possible, if you have not used the product before, try it out first on a test patch.
- Rub the area to be tanned with a cloth, brush etc. to remove surface dry skin cells. The lotion will 'take' better.
- Make sure your skin is moisturised before applying the tanning lotion.
- After moisturising, wait a few minutes before applying the lotion evenly.
- Use less lotion on knees, elbows and feet, where more colour tends to be absorbed.
- Wear loose, minimal clothing until the lotion is dry, to avoid staining.
- Keep cool when applying the lotion and for several hours afterwards – excessive perspiration will cause streaking.



# Hair tinting

## Facial hair

You may find it easier to have facial hair tinted professionally. We would definitely **not** recommend dyeing your own eye lashes; the dye has to be mixed with peroxide, which can badly damage your eyes.

## Dyes for eyebrows

It is advisable to carry out a patch test before using a product:

- Test a small patch of skin 2-7 days before applying the product everywhere.
- Mix up a small quantity of dye, not in a metal container.
- Apply it to a small area of skin where it will not notice, for example behind the ear.
- If there is a reaction, wash the dye off and apply antiseptic cream.
- The dye is safe to use if there is no adverse reaction after 48 hours.

Points to remember when applying the dye:

- Keep the dye away from your eyes and remove contact lenses.
- Avoid dyeing skin affected by other skin conditions such as eczema or psoriasis.
- Cleanse the area to be dyed beforehand.
- Put a little petroleum jelly on the surrounding skin to prevent it staining.
- To get good coverage, apply the dye with a small brush, firstly from the outer end of the brow to the centre, then from the centre back to the outer end.
- Follow the instructions on the product.

## **Dyes for beards and moustaches**

This is the same as for eyebrows, but you can remove some hairs to test for colour. Remember to apply the dye in an upward and downward direction to get good coverage.

## **Dyeing head hair affected by vitiligo**

Points to remember:

- Again, doing a patch test is important if you are dyeing your hair at home.
- You will need a product which contains ammonia to raise the hair cuticle.
- You will probably have to leave the product on your hair a little longer than the instructions suggest.

## **Dyeing pubic hair**

This can be done at home, using a vegetable based dye. As with other dyes, this has to be combined with peroxide to activate the dye. Creams are easier to use than a jelly or liquid.

You should follow the same basic steps as for dyeing eyebrows. As with dyeing head hair, you may need to give the dye longer to develop than the instructions suggest.

## Felt tip pens

A firm called Magic Styl'o produce a semi-permanent, water-based pen which can be used for colouring small areas of skin or hair, for example on finger tips, lips or eyebrows. The pens are easy to use and, like fake tans, the colour does not rub off. There is a range of colours available, including three different shades of brown, but you are unlikely to get as good a colour match as you can with camouflage.

You can get more information about the pens on the website [www.magicstylo.com](http://www.magicstylo.com). In the UK they are obtainable from Dawn Cragg at: St Michael's Place, 58a Bridgegate, Retford, Notts, DN22 7UZ.  
Tel: 01777 860500  
Email: [dawn@dawncragg.net](mailto:dawn@dawncragg.net)

## Medical Tattooing

Medical tattooing is also called micropigmentation or permanent cosmetics. It is a more permanent method of skin camouflage, suitable for small areas of skin, for example lips and eyebrows. **It is only suitable for someone with vitiligo if their vitiligo has been stable for at least two years.** Medical tattooing involves implanting pigments into the skin, which are not the same as the inks used by high street tattooists. A test is needed to make sure people are not allergic to these pigments and the procedure is not suitable for everyone.

Unfortunately, at present, medical tattooing is an unregulated profession. In inexperienced, untrained hands, there are a considerable number of things that could go wrong, including damage to your skin. It is essential that medical tattooing is done by a specialist technician who is well trained and has experience. If you feel medical tattooing is an option for you, please make sure that your practitioner is properly qualified and experienced.



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