

Case Studies

The following are two case studies that resulted in particularly catastrophic outcomes that have been collected by DWED. Names have been changed to respect privacy.

Case study 1: E went for a tattoo on her foot without knowledge that she had undiagnosed neuropathy at the time and also an allergy to coloured ink. Despite cleaning well and trying to keep her tattoo dry E subsequently developed infection in her foot. This began as a skin infection but subsequently spread into her bone. Eventually the infection became so bad that E had to have her little toe amputated as well as a large part of the right side of her foot.

Case Study 2: S had a tattoo applied to her back during a stage whereby she was routinely omitting insulin and her sugar levels were “wildly out of control”. At first her tattoo seemed to be healing well, but after a few days S became aware of a very tender sore spot right next to the tattoo. This became increasingly worse as the days went on and the longer S waited without seeking medical advice the bigger the spot became. Eventually S visited her GP who instantly referred her to Accident and Emergency. It was concluded that S had developed an abscess and so she then had to undergo surgery to have the abscess cut out of her back. She describes herself at that time as being “very poorly and in a lot of pain” and reports she now has a noticeable scar where her tattoo should be.

Please also see our podcast interviews with two additional volunteers regarding their personal experiences which can also be found in the DWED members section this month, as well as a transcript interview with Health Professional Neil Black.