

# An Erased Physical Marking from the Holocaust

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**W**e present a case of an 84-year-old woman who presented to the *Centres de Chirurgie de la Main* (Paris, France) hand surgery clinic with a spiral fracture of her left humerus. While performing a physical exam of her left arm our attention was drawn to a scar on her proximal left forearm. When she was asked as to the origin of this scar the patient relayed her story. This scar is a result of a surgery that was performed a short time after she was liberated from the Auschwitz concentration camp. The patient stated she was a young physician trying to find her place in post World War II France and found that wearing the number she was marked with during her imprisonment made her life difficult; hence, she had it removed.

The Auschwitz concentration camp complex was the only location where pris-

oners were systematically tattooed during the Holocaust [1]. For many, the blurred lines of a serial number on a forearm are an indelible image of the Holocaust. The tattoos of the survivors have come to symbolize the utter brutality and attempt of the Nazis to dehumanize their victims [1].

To the best of our knowledge, this is the first report of such an act [Figure 1].

**Figure 1.** Scar as a result of a surgery to remove Auschwitz tattoo number



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## References

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## Capsule

### Clinical uses of cellular communication

Exosomes are a type of extracellular vesicle that contain constituents (protein, DNA, and RNA) of the cells that secrete them. They are taken up by distant cells, where they can affect cell function and behavior. Intercellular communication through exosomes seems to be involved in the pathogenesis of various disorders, including cancer, neurodegeneration, and inflammatory diseases. In a review, **Kalluri** and **LeBleu**

discussed the biogenesis and function of exosomes in disease, highlighting areas where more research is needed. They also discussed the potential clinical applications of exosome profiling for diagnostics and exosome-mediated delivery of therapeutics to target disease cells.

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**“If we can really understand the problem, the answer will come out of it, because the answer is not separate from the problem”**

Jiddu Krishnamurti (1895–1986), Indian philosopher, speaker, and writer