PIERCING
AFTERCARE

Cleaning Solutions:

* Packaged .9% sterile saline solution with no additives (read the label!) or non-iodized sea salt mixture:
  Dissolve 4 teaspoons per gallon (1/4 teaspoon per 8 oz.
  Cup) of non-iodized (iodine free) sea salt to warm distilled
  or bottled water. A stronger mixture is not better! Saline
  solution that is too strong can irritate the piercing. If you
  have high blood pressure or a heart condition, please
  check with your doctor before using a saline product inside
  the mouth as your primary cleaning solution.

* Liquid anti-microbial or germicidal soap.

* Anti-microbial or antibacterial alcohol-free mouth
  rinse (for oral piercing)

Cleaning Instructions for Body Piercings:

1) WASH your hands thoroughly prior to cleaning, or
  touching on or near your piercing for any reason.

2) SALINE soak at least two to three times daily. Simply
  invert a cup of warm saline solution over the area to form
  a vacuum and hold for 3-5 minutes. The longer you soak, the
  better. For certain placements it may be easier to apply
  using fresh gauze or a cotton ball saturated with saline
  solution. A brief rinse will remove any residue.

3) SOAP no more than once or twice a day. While showering,
  lather up a pearl size drop of the soap to clean the
  jewelry and the piercing. Leave the cleanser on the
  piercing no more than thirty seconds, then rinse
  thoroughly to remove all traces of the soap from the
  piercing.

4) DRY with disposable paper products such as gauze or
  tissues, because clot towels can harbor bacteria and catch
  on new piercings causing injury. Pat gently to avoid
  trauma.

Cleaning Instructions for Oral Piercings:

Rinse mouth 4-5 times daily with cleaning solution for
30-60 seconds after meals and at bedtime during the
entire healing period. If you over clean, it may cause
discoloration or irritation of tongue.

What Is Normal:

Initially: Some bleeding, localized swelling, tenderness,
or bruising is common.

During healing: Some discoloration, itching, secretion
of a whitish-yellow fluid (not pus) that will form some
crust on the jewelry. The tissue may tighten around the
jewelry as it heals.

Once healed: The jewelry may not move freely in the
piercing; DO NOT force it. If you fail to include cleaning
your piercing as a part of your daily hygiene routine,
normal but smelly bodily secretions may accumulate. A
piercing may seem healed before healing is complete.
This is because piercings heal from the outside in, and
although it feels healed the tissue remains fragile on the
inside. BE PATIENT, and keep cleaning throughout the
entire healing period. Even healed piercings can shrink or
close in minutes after having been there for years! This
varies from person to person; if you like your piercing,
leave the jewelry in place.

What To Do:

Wash your hands prior to touching the piercing; leave it
alone except when cleaning. It is not necessary to rotate
the jewelry while healing except possibly during cleaning
and only after the piercing is through the tender
stage. Stay healthy, get enough sleep and eat a nutriti-
ous diet. The healthier your lifestyle, the easier it will be
for your piercing to heal. Exercise during healing is fine,
just “listen” to your body. Make sure your bedding is kept
clean and changed regularly. Wear clean, comfortable
breathable clothing that protects your piercing while
sleeping. Showering is safer than taking a bath, because
bath tubs tend to harbor bacteria. If you would like to
take a bath, clean the tub well before each use.

For Oral Piercing: To help reduce swelling after getting
pierced, allow small pieces of ice to dissolve in the mouth
for about 30-60 minutes. You can also take an over
the counter, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory such as Ibupro-
fen or Naproxyn Sodium according to package instruc-
tions. Sleep with your head elevated above your heart
during the first few nights. Use a new soft-bristled
toothbrush and keep it clean. Brush your teeth, and use
your chosen rinse (saline or mouthwash) after every
meal. During healing floss daily, and gently brush your
teeth, tongue and jewelry. Once healed, brush the
jewelry more thoroughly to avoid plaque build-up. Stay
healthy, the healthier your lifestyle, the easier it will be for
your piercing to heal. Get enough sleep and eat a
nutritious diet.

Eating: Slowly eat small bites of food, placed directly
onto the molars. Avoid eating spicy, salty, acidic, or hot
temperature foods or beverages for a few days. Cold
foods and beverage are soothing and help reduce
swelling. For tongue piercing, try to keep your tongue
level in your mouth as you chew and swallow. For labret
(cheek and lip) piercings, be cautious about opening your
mouth too wide as this can result in the backing of the
jewelry catching on the teeth.

What To Avoid:

DO NOT TOUCH THE PIERCING AREA OR JEWELRY.
Avoid undue trauma such as friction from clothing,
excessive motion of the area, playing with the jewelry
and vigorous cleaning. These activities can cause the
formation of unsightly and uncomfortable scar tissue,
migration, prolonged healing, and other complications.
Avoid the use of alcohol, hydrogen peroxide, Betadine,
Hibiclens or ointment. Avoid over cleaning. This can
delay your healing and irritate your piercing. Avoid all
oral contact, rough play, and contact with others’ bodily
fluids on or near your piercing during healing. Avoid
stress and recreational drug use including excessive
caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol. Avoid submerging the
piercing in bodies of water such as lakes, pools, jacuzzis,
etc. or protect your piercing using a special waterproof
bandage such as Tegaderm, which is available at drug
stores. Avoid all beauty and personal care products on or
around the piercing including cosmetics, lotions, and
sprays, etc. Don’t hang charms or any object from your
jewelry until the piercing is fully healed.

Extra concerns for oral piercing: DO NOT PLAY WITH
THE JEWELRY. Long-term effects of playing with, and
clicking the jewelry against the teeth can result in
permanent damage to teeth and other oral structures.
Avoid any mouthwash containing alcohol. It can irritate
the area and delay healing. Avoid chewing gum,
tobacco, fingernails, pencils, sunglasses, etc. Avoid
sharing plates, cups, and eating utensils. Avoid smoking!
It increases risks and lengthens healing time.
Hints and Tips:

Jewelry: Unless there is a problem with the size, style, or material of the initial jewelry, leave it in place for the entire healing period. A qualified piercer should perform any necessary jewelry change that occurs during healing. Contact your piercer if your jewelry must be temporarily removed (such as for a medical procedure). There are non-metallic jewelry alternatives.

With clean hands or paper product, be sure to regularly check threaded ends on your jewelry for tightness (“Righty-tighty, lefty-loosey”). Carry a clean spare ball in case of loss or breakage. Should you decide you no longer want the piercing, seek professional help in the removal of the jewelry and continue cleaning the piercing until the hole closes. In most cases only a small indentation will remain.

Once the swelling has subsided and the piercing is healed, it is common to replace the original, longer jewelry with a shorter post.

For Particular Areas:

Navel: A hard, vented eye patch (sold at pharmacies) can be applied under tight clothing (such as nylon stockings) or secured using a length of ace bandage around the body (to avoid irritation from adhesive). This can protect the area from restrictive clothing, excess irritation, and impact during physical activities such as contact sports.

Ear/Ear Cartilage and Facial: Use the t-shirt trick: dress your pillow in a large, clean t-shirt and turn it night-time clean; one provides four clean surfaces for sleeping. Maintain cleanliness of telephones, headphones, eyeglasses, helmets, hats and anything that contacts the pierced area. Use caution when styling your hair and advise your stylist of a new or healing piercing. Do not sleep on the piercing. The weight of your head will make the piercing sore and prolong healing and increase the chance for complications.

Nipples: While it’s healthy for the piercing to be exposed to some air in order to “breathe”, the support of a tight cotton shirt or sports bra may provide protection and feel comfortable, especially for sleeping or exercise.

Genital: In most cases you can engage activity as soon as you feel ready. Comfort and hygiene are vital. During healing all sexual activities must be gentle. To increase comfort and decrease trauma, soak in warm saline solution or plain water to remove any crusty matter, prior to sexual activity. Use barriers such as condoms, dental dams, and Tegaderm, etc, to avoid contact with a partner’s bodily fluids, even in long-term relationships. Use clean, disposable barriers on sex toys. Wash hands before touching on or near the piercing. Use a new container of water based lubricant. Do not use your own saliva as a lubricant. After sex, an additional saline soak or clean water rinse is suggested. Prince Albert and Apadravya piercings can bleed freely for the first few days. If using soap, urinate after cleaning any piercing that is near the urethra. Each body is unique and healing times vary considerably. If you have any questions, please contact your piercer.

Healing Times:

1-3 Months
Lobes, Tongue and most Genital piercings

2-4 Months
Nostril, Lip, Septum, Cartilage, Nipples Tragus and Eyebrow piercings

2-6 Months
Navel piercings

4-6 Months
Ampalang and Amadravya piercings

6-12 Months
Surface piercings

Any other questions feel free to call us at:

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