

## BODY PIERCING - AFTERCARE INSTRUCTIONS

This section to be provided to the client and legal guardian (if client is under 18 yrs of age).

You've just received a body piercing by a trained body piercing licensee. Now it is up to you to take appropriate care of your piercing during the critical healing period.

If you have any questions or comments during the healing of your piercing, please contact your licensed piercer at: ( ) - ( ) - ( ) - ( ) - ( ) - ( )  
(Daytime Phone Number)

**Comments or complaints; contact:** The Oregon Health Licensing Agency  
Regulatory Division  
(503) 373-2024  
700 Summer St. N.E., Suite 320  
Salem, Oregon 97301-1287

### PIERCING AFTERCARE

DO NOT use ANY product marked "For External Use Only" including, but not limited to, rubbing alcohol, hydrogen peroxide, lidocaine (e.g. Bactine), triple antibiotic ointment (e.g. Neosporin), antiseptic (e.g. Betadine/Hibiclens etc.).

Use products that *will not* irritate the piercing and will facilitate fast healing, such as:

- **A mild, fragrance-free liquid soap-preferably anti-microbial or germicidal.**
- **Packaged sterile saline solution with NO additives, or a non-iodized sea salt mixture:** Dissolve 1/8 – 1/4 teaspoon of non-iodized (iodine-free) sea salt into one cup (8 oz) of warm distilled or bottled water. A stronger mixture is not better; a saline solution that is too strong can irritate your piercing.

### CLEANING INSTRUCTIONS

Wash your hands before cleaning your piercing! Use the cleaning solution(s) recommended for your piercing for the "entire" healing time. Do this even if the piercing looks or feels healed sooner.

- **Do not move the piercing jewelry when the site is crusty; it does more harm to the piercing site than good.**
- **Do not play with the new piercing, physical irritation is the worst!**
- **When clothing is in contact with the piercing, make sure it is clean, loose and breathable.**

### Healing Time Estimations

**EARLOBES: Usually heals in 4 – 8 weeks;** use saline twice daily, sea salt soaks as desired for comfort.

**EAR CARTILAGE: Usually heals in 6 months;** use saline twice daily, as cartilage is prone to developing cysts. Be sure to rinse jewelry and ear after shampooing to remove residue. Clean ear after using styling products. Cartilage piercings are tender to sleep on, avoid sleeping on your new piercing as irritation will extend the healing time.

**NOSTRIL-NOSE: Usually heals in 10 – 12 weeks (septum, 4 weeks);** use saline twice daily inside and out with a saline saturated q-tip.

**EYEBROW: Usually heals in 8 – 10 weeks;** use saline twice daily.

**TONGUE: Usually heals in about 4 weeks;** use alcohol-free antiseptic mouth wash 2 – 4 times daily. Substitute saline as needed; saline can be used as often as desired. You will have swelling for about a week. Rest your tongue. Do not stick it out past your teeth for the first week. Eat small frequent meals and frozen fruit bars. Advil, Aleve and Motrin will help swelling but may also cause bleeding so don't overdo it. *Drinking alcohol in any quantity will significantly increase swelling during the first week or two.* Drink plenty of water. Brush teeth gently at first; do not brush the tongue during healing. Expect to see some lymph drainage coming from the piercing site. No kissing (or any oral contact) until healed. Check to be sure the barbell balls are screwed on tight and be sure to "downsize" after healing.

**LABRETS-LIPS-BEAUTY MARKS: Usually heals in 8+ weeks;** use saline twice daily, inside and out. Remember that intra-oral healing appears white. If a stud was used, expect the disc to embed slightly into the lip over time, but do not allow new skin to form over the disc. If this begins, see your piercer immediately for a jewelry change. Downsize post length on stud (if used) after two weeks.

**NAVEL: Usually heals in 6 – 9 months;** use saline twice daily. Expect some redness at the edges for up to a couple of months. A hard, vented eye patch can be applied under tight clothing or secured by using an elastic bandage around the body. This can protect the area from restrictive clothing, excess irritation, and impact during physical activities such as contact sports. Pants or skirt lines should be worn below your navel or it can be irritated so badly that it will not heal.

**NIPPLES: Usually heals in 4 – 6 months;** use saline twice daily. *No oral contact until fully healed.* This piercing can produce "crusties" for a year or more. During the first few days, many women report that wearing a bra helps with soreness. A sports bra is helpful at night. Men usually find a tighter fitting cotton tank top is helpful as well.

### Additional Information and Advise

**Swimming:** Chlorine can over dry a new piercing. It is best to avoid soaking in pools and hot tubs. Stay away from rivers and lakes while healing; they are full of bacteria. In cases of accidental exposure, clean your piercing immediately afterwards.

**Keloids/Scars/Cysts:** Some piercings are prone to developing keloids or scars, or cysts. A cyst is a fluid filled bump very close to the piercing. Usually they are tender; do not attempt to pop a suspected cyst. Regular sea salt soaks encourages drainage. Should a cyst occur and sea salts soaks offer no relief, contact your physician.