

# A PIERCEE'S BILL OF RIGHTS

EVERY PERSON BEING PIERCED HAS THE RIGHT...

1. To be pierced in a hygienic environment by a clean, conscientious, sober piercer wearing a fresh pair of disposable medical examination gloves.
2. To be pierced with a brand new, completely sterilized single-use needle that is immediately disposed of in a medical Sharps container after use on one piercing.
3. To be touched only with freshly sterilized and appropriate implements, properly used and disposed of or re-sterilized (where appropriate) in an autoclave prior to use on anyone else.
4. To know that piercing guns are NEVER appropriate, and are often dangerous when used on anything -- including earlobes.
5. To the peace of mind that comes from knowing that their piercer knows and practices the very highest standards of sterilization and hygiene.
6. To have a knowledgeable piercer evaluate and discuss appropriate piercings and jewelry for her/his individual anatomy and lifestyle.
7. To be fully informed of all risks and possible complications involved in his/her piercing choice before making any decisions.
8. To seek and receive a second opinion either from another piercer within the studio or from another studio.
9. To have initial piercings fitted with jewelry of appropriate size, material, design, and construction to best promote healing. Gold-plated, gold-filled or sterling silver jewelry is never appropriate for any new or unhealed piercing.
10. To see pictures, be given a tour of the piercing studio, and to have all questions fully and politely answered before making or following through on any decision.
11. To be fully informed about proper aftercare, both verbally and in writing, and to have continuing access to the piercer for assistance throughout the healing process.
12. To be treated with respect, sensitivity and knowledge regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, ethnicity, ability, health status or piercing choice.
13. To change her/his mind, halt the procedure and leave at any point if the situation seems uncomfortable or improper.

A public service message from Skincraft and the Association of Professional Piercers. If you can't make it to Skincraft for your piercing, make sure that you still get the safe, responsible, and professional piercing experience that you deserve. For more information contact:

Association of Professional Piercers  
P.O. Box 1287, Lawrence, KS 66044  
1.888.888.1APP or [www.safepiercing.org](http://www.safepiercing.org)

*Aftercare for Piercings  
Below  
the  
Neck*

**SKINCRAFT**  
Body Piercing

**4036 Hamilton Ave.  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
(513) 281-5798**

Your piercer was \_\_\_\_\_.  
Please contact me if I can assist you in any way.

Jewelry info: Gauge \_\_\_\_\_ Dia./Length \_\_\_\_\_

Your piercing was performed professionally and appropriately. Follow these simple suggestions, and your healing period should go smoothly. Although we are not physicians, your piercer is available whenever you have questions about aftercare. Please call us any time!

## A Normal Piercing

Initially:

- May be tender, swollen, itchy, bruised and/or slightly red for a few weeks.
- May bleed a little for the first few days. Prince Albert and Apadravya piercings may bleed freely for the first few days.

During healing:

- May secrete a whitish-yellow fluid which crusts on the jewelry. This is not pus.
- May tighten around the jewelry as it heals, making turning when dry somewhat difficult.

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.

## How Should I Clean My Piercing?

Choose ONE gentle liquid antibacterial soap, such as: Tea Tree Oil soap, Satin, triclosan soap.

- You may find it easiest to do this as the last thing you do before getting out of the shower. Be sure to wash hands thoroughly before cleansing. First remove any crusted matter from either side of the piercing with warm water and soap. You may gently move the jewelry back and forth through the piercing several times. Immediately rinse thoroughly while moving the jewelry. Do not allow any residue to remain on the piercing.
- Genital piercees should urinate after cleaning any piercing that is near the urethra.
- Dry the piercing with disposable paper products such as gauze or tissues, because cloth towels can harbor bacteria and catch on new piercings causing injury. Pat gently to avoid trauma.
- Clean the piercing no more than two times a day. Cleaning more frequently may damage the delicate skin cells, and cleaning less frequently may invite an infection. When you're not cleaning the piercing, leave it alone.

## What Else Can I Do?

- Hot soaks and compresses, with the optional addition of ¼ tsp non-iodized sea salt per cup of clean water, are strongly suggested. To soak, make a compress (with paper towels to insure cleanliness), or invert a cup of water over the piercing, forming a vacuum, if possible. You may need to resoak the compress occasionally to keep it as warm as possible. You should do this twice daily, for about 5-10 minutes.
- 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.
- Stay healthy. Get enough sleep and eat a nutritious 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. Many piercees have found that Vitamin C (3000 mg in mineral ascorbate form), multivitamins, and a Zinc supplement (women:60 mg, men:120 mg, for about two weeks) speed healing and regeneration of tissue.
- Showering is safer than taking a bath, because bathtubs tend to harbor bacteria. If you would like to take a bath, clean the tub well before each use.
- Make sure your bedding is kept clean and changed regularly. Wear clean, comfortable breathable clothing that protects your piercing while sleeping
- Nipple piercees may want to sleep in a clean T-shirt or jogging bra for a few nights.
- Genital piercees can use a panty liner or tissue to absorb excess moisture or spot bleeding and cushion the piercing. This is especially helpful for guiche piercings.
- Avoid restrictive or irritating clothing, or clothing that limits oxygen flow to the area.
- Any sexual contact should be gentle, and latex barriers (dental dams, condoms, finger cots) should be used to protect the piercing from bodily fluids during the healing process, even if you are in a monogamous relationship. Be sure to avoid oral contact with the piercing for at least six weeks.

## When Can I Remove or Change the Jewelry?

- Your piercing will not be completely healed for several years. Even after the piercing has healed, reinsertion can sometimes be difficult or even impossible without the proper aids.
- Jewelry should not be changed during the initial healing period unless there is a problem with the size, style, or material of the initial jewelry. Be sure to always wear appropriate jewelry in your piercings, even when fully healed.
- If you must remove the jewelry temporarily, it is best to use a retainer to insure that the piercing stays open.
- It's no problem to permanently remove the jewelry. In most cases, only a small indentation or scar will remain. We encourage you to call your piercer. They will be happy to assist you.

## Do I Have an Infection?

Infections are caused by contact with bacteria, fungi, or other living pathogens. Piercing infections can usually be traced to one of the following activities:

- Touching the piercing with unwashed hands, or letting someone else touch the piercing.
- Oral contact, including your own saliva, or allowing bodily fluids to contact the piercing.
- Going into a pool, hot tub, lake, ocean, or other body of water (your own clean bathtub is okay).

## How Can I Tell If I Have an Infection?

While these symptoms may also indicate other problems, look for the following indications of infection:

- Redness and swelling
- A sensation of heat at the piercing site
- Pain, especially throbbing or spreading pain
- Unusual discharge. It may be yellowish, greenish, or grayish.

## I Think I Have an Infection. What Should I Do?

- While it is never inappropriate to see your piercing-friendly physician, a call to your piercer may save you a trip. If possible, visit your piercer and show them the piercing. Also tell them about any circumstances which may have led to an infection.
- Please don't remove the jewelry! This may aggravate the problem by closing off drainage.

## Common Problems You Can Avoid

- Overcleaning, vigorous cleaning, or using a cleanser that is too strong can produce symptoms very similar to an infection. The skin may be very tender and appear shiny, and there may be a clear discharge.
- Friction caused by tight or heavy clothing, rough sexual activity, or excessive movement of the area can cause dark redness, keloids, discharge, and rejection/migration.
- Stress, poor diet, or illness can cause longer healing times, or migration of the piercing.
- Reactions to the metals used in our jewelry are extremely rare. Often, a cleanser reaction or other problem is mistaken for a metal allergy. That area may feel hot and sore, like a low grade infection, or the body may attempt to pull away from the metal, resulting in a large, growing cavity.
- Occasionally, the selected jewelry may not be inappropriate. This may or may not be due to circumstances that occurred after the piercing. If the jewelry is too thin or too heavy, too large or too small in diameter, or not an appropriate style (a barbell instead of a ring, for example), you may experience healing problems. Contact your piercer if you suspect that you may need different jewelry.

## Estimated Initial Healing Times

Everyone heals at a different rate. These are the average times for which you should clean the piercing twice daily and treat it like new, healing tissue. Remember that even after the initial healing period, your piercing will still need one full year or longer to completely heal (toughen up). Always treat the piercing with care and gentleness.

- Vertical and Horizontal Clit Hood, Inner Labia, Frenum, Prince Albert: 6-8 weeks
- Nipple, Outer Labia, Guiche, Scrotum, Dydoes, Ampallang, Apadravya: 2-6 months

These guidelines are based on a combination of vast professional experience, common sense, research and extensive clinical practice. This is not to be considered a substitute for medical advice from a doctor. If you suspect an infection, seek medical attention. Keep in mind that the removal of jewelry can lead to further complications. Please contact the Cincinnati Health Department's Communicable Disease Office at 357-7392 if you have any problems associated with your piercing.

**QUESTIONS? PLEASE CALL US AT (513)281-5798 FOR ASSISTANCE.**