

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

Aftercare for
**Oral
Piercings**

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.

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:

- 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?

- Always wash your hands thoroughly before touching the area.
- Use an antimicrobial or antibacterial alcohol-free mouthwash (such as Tech 2000 or Biotene) and/or packaged sterile saline solution with no additives or non-iodized sea salt mixture. Dissolve no more than 1/4 tsp non-iodized sea salt per one cup (8 oz.) of 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.)
- Rinse your mouth 4-5 times daily for 30-60 seconds after eating, smoking, or putting anything in your mouth. You should dilute your mouthwash with up to 50% water to avoid damaging your new skin cells and irritating your mouth.
- If you have a lip or cheek piercing, you must also clean the outside with a liquid anti-bacterial soap such as Satin, Softsoap or tea-tree oil soap. Use a cotton swab to remove any crusted matter and work a small amount of the solution into the piercing then rinse thoroughly.
- You may also use the saline solution to soak the outside of the piercing.

What Else Can I Do?

- Allow small pieces of ice to dissolve in your mouth for the first 24-48 hours to reduce swelling. Although we do not recommend any analgesic, many piercees have found that an anti-inflammatory nonprescription medication such as Advil (ibuprofen) can conceivably reduce the amount of swelling.
- Use a new soft-bristled toothbrush and keep it clean.
- Sleep with your head elevated above your heart for the first few nights.
- Avoid oral contact or any other contact with bodily fluids for at least six weeks. Latex or other impermeable barriers should be used to protect the piercing from body fluids during the healing process, even if you are in a monogamous relationship.
- 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.
- Cut down or stop smoking. Smokers may experience a considerably longer healing time.
- Don't be in a hurry to downsize your jewelry (get a smaller or shorter piece). You're ready to downsize when there's about an extra 1/4 " of room on the post or ring first thing in the morning. Once the swelling has subsided, it is vital to replace the original, longer post with a shorter post.

When Can I Remove or Change the Jewelry?

- Your piercing will not be fully healed for several years. Even after the piercing has healed, reinsertion can sometimes be difficult or even impossible without the proper aids.
- Except for downsizing by a qualified professional, jewelry should not be changed during the initial healing period, usually about 2-6 months. Be sure to always wear appropriate jewelry in your piercings, even when fully healed.
- If you must remove the jewelry temporarily, call your piercer. They can easily remove the jewelry without damaging the piercing, and can help you reinsert the jewelry as soon as pos-

sible. It's no problem to permanently remove the jewelry. In most cases, only a small indentation will remain. We encourage you to call your piercer for assistance.

How Can I Tell If 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
- Allowing bodily fluids to contact the piercing
- Contact with hair, cosmetics, oils, foods, or other agents without proper disinfection
- Going into a pool, hot tub, lake, or other body of water (your own clean bathtub is okay).

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 contact us before you remove the jewelry! This may aggravate the problem by closing off the drainage for the matter.

Common Problems You Can Avoid

- Over cleaning, 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. Inside the mouth, use of undiluted mouthwash may discolor the tongue, and produce a discharge and tenderness.
- DO NOT PLAY WITH THE JEWELRY. Friction caused by excessive pressure, rough sexual activity, or excessive movement of the area can cause dark redness, keloids, discharge, and rejection/migration. Tongue piercings that are played with too soon may develop scar tissue around the entrance and/or exit.
- Avoid chewing on gum, tobacco, fingernails, pencils, sunglasses, etc.
- Avoid aspirin or alcohol, and large amounts of caffeine.
- Stress, poor diet, drug use 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 large or too small in diameter, or not an appropriate style, 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 care for your piercing as outlined above, 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. Always treat the piercing with care and gentleness.

- Lip, Labre, Beauty Mark: 6-8 weeks or longer
- Tongue: 6-8 weeks
- Cheek: 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.