

Date _____ Piercer _____

Your _____ piercing is expected to

take _____ or longer to heal.

Jewelry _____

Earliest change/downsize date _____

CLEANING SOLUTIONS

- **Sterile Saline:** (ex: Wound Wash) in a pressurized can (with no additives, read the label) is a gentle choice for piercing aftercare.
- **Sea Salt Solution:** (This can be a viable alternative to sterile saline) Dissolve 4 teaspoons of non-iodized sea salt into one gallon of distilled water. A stronger mixture is not better; salt solution that is too strong can irritate the piercing.

CLEANING INSTRUCTIONS FOR BODY PIERCINGS

- **WASH** your hands thoroughly before cleaning or touching your piercing.
- **SOAK** with warm saline/sea salt solution at least 2 times a day or more. Heat up a small amount (make it as warm as you can handle). Invert the cup over your piercing, and soak for 5 - 10 minutes. For certain placements, it may be easier to apply using clean gauze or a cotton ball saturated in the solution.
- **CLEAN** your piercing at least 2 times a day or more (if needed) with saline/sea salt solution during healing. Saturate a Q-tip with saline/sea salt solution and use it to gently remove any crusty matter from the jewelry and the surrounding area.
- **RINSE** your piercing with saline or water. Do not move the jewelry back and forth through the piercing during cleaning or rinsing. This damages the fragile tissue inside your new piercing, slowing down the healing process.
- **DRY** by gently patting with clean, disposable paper products. Cloth towels can harbor bacteria and snag on jewelry causing injury.

CLEANING INSTRUCTIONS FOR INSIDE THE MOUTH

Use one or both of the following solutions for inside the mouth:

- Rinse mouth with lukewarm saline/sea salt solution for 30 seconds after meals and at bedtime during the entire healing period. (If you have high blood pressure or a heart condition, please check with your doctor before using a saline product as your primary cleaning solution).
- Antimicrobial or antibacterial, alcohol-free, mouthwash diluted 50/50 with water. Limit use to 5 times daily. Cleaning too often or with too strong a rinse can cause discoloration and irritation of your mouth and piercing.

WHAT IS NORMAL

- Initially some bleeding, localized swelling, tenderness and/or bruising.
- 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 part of your daily hygiene routine, normal but smelly bodily secretions may accumulate.

- A piercing may seem healed before the healing process is complete. This is because piercings heal from the outside in, and although it feels fine, the tissue remains fragile on the inside. Be patient, and keep cleaning your piercing throughout the entire initial healing period.

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.
- Make sure that your jewelry and skin are free from any discharge when cleaning your piercing. Irritation can occur when crusty matter is accidentally forced inside the piercing.
- **Stay Healthy.** Eat a nutritious diet. The healthier your lifestyle, the easier it will be for your piercing to heal.
- Get enough sleep.
- Exercise during healing is fine; listen to your body.
- Make sure your bedding is kept clean and changed regularly. Wear clean, comfortable, breathable (cotton) clothing that protects your piercing while sleeping.
- Showering is safer than taking a bath because bathtubs tend to harbor bacteria. If you bathe in a tub, clean the tub well before each use.
- Always clean your piercing after showering and/or washing your face to remove any shampoos and/or soaps from the area.

WHAT TO AVOID

- Avoid cleaning with alcohol, hydrogen peroxide, Dial® or other soaps containing triclosan, iodine, or any harsh products, as these can damage cells. Also, avoid ointments as they prevent necessary circulation.
- Avoid Bactine®, pierced ear care solutions, and other products containing Benzalkonium Chloride (BZK). These can be irritating and are not intended for long-term wound care.
- Avoid over cleaning. This can delay your healing and irritate your piercing.
- Avoid undue trauma such as sleeping on your piercing, friction from clothing, 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 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 including lakes, pools, hot tubs, etc. Or, protect your piercing using a waterproof wound-sealant bandage (such as 3M Nexcare Clean Seals or Tegaderm). These are available at most drugstores.
- Avoid all beauty and personal care products on or around the piercing including cosmetics, lotions, sprays, exfoliants, cleansers, etc.
- Don't hang charms or other objects from your jewelry until the piercing is fully healed.

HINTS AND TIPS

- Unless there is a problem with the size, style or material of the initial jewelry, leave it in place for the entire healing

period. See a qualified piercer to perform any jewelry change that becomes necessary during healing.

- Contact your piercer for a non-metallic jewelry alternative if your metal jewelry must be temporarily removed (such as for a medical procedure).
- Leave jewelry in at all times. Even healed piercings you have had for years can shrink and close in minutes! This varies from person to person; if you like your piercing, keep jewelry in it.
- With clean hands or paper product, be sure to regularly check the threaded ends on your jewelry for tightness (righty tighty, lefty loosey).
- Should you decide you no longer want the piercing, simply remove the jewelry (or have a professional piercer remove it) and continue cleaning the piercing until the hole closes. In most cases, only a small scar will remain.
- In the event an infection is suspected, quality jewelry or an inert alternative should be left in place to allow for drainage of the infection. If the jewelry is removed, the surface cells can close up, which can seal the infection inside the piercing channel and result in an abscess. Until an infection is cleared up, leave in quality jewelry or an appropriate substitute.

FOR PARTICULAR AREAS

NAVEL:

- A hard, vented eye patch can be applied under tight clothing (such as nylon stockings) or secured using an ace bandage or medical tape. This can protect the area from restrictive clothing, excess irritation, and impact during physical activities such as contact sports.

EAR / EAR CARTILAGE / FACIAL / NOSTRIL:

- Use the T-shirt trick: Dress your pillow in a large clean t-shirt and turn it nightly; one clean t-shirt provides four clean surfaces for sleeping.
- Avoid sleeping on your piercing, cell phones/telephones, earbuds/headphones, stethoscopes, lotion/make-up, helmets/hats, pet hair/dander, and anything that may come in contact with your healing piercing.
- Use caution when styling your hair and advise your stylist of a new or healing piercing.
- Be careful when using towels or wash cloths around your new piercing to avoid catching/snagging your jewelry.

SURFACE ANCHORS:

- These piercings require maintenance during their entire lifetime because matter can build up underneath the threaded top causing the piercing to become irritated. Continue to clean piercing even after healed to prevent build up.
- Avoid putting makeup on these piercings even after healed.
- Even with proper care, surface anchors may be less permanent than other body piercings.

NIPPLE:

- The support of a tight cotton shirt or sports bra may provide protection and feel comfortable, especially for sleeping.

ORAL PIERCINGS (TONGUE, LIP, LABRET, etc.):

- It is normal for the first 3 - 5 days to experience significant swelling, light bleeding, bruising, and/or tenderness. After that, expect some swelling, light secretion of whitish-yellow fluid (not pus) during healing.
- Avoid aspirin, alcohol, and large amounts of caffeine as long as you are experiencing bleeding or swelling.
- Once the swelling has subsided, it is vital to replace the original, longer jewelry with a shorter post to avoid intra-oral damage. Because the necessary jewelry change often occurs during healing, it should be done by a qualified piercer.
- To minimize swelling, allow small pieces of ice to dissolve in your mouth. Elevate your head at night to help reduce swelling in the morning. You can also take an over the counter, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory such as ibuprofen or naproxen sodium according to package instructions.
- During healing floss daily, and gently brush your teeth, tongue, and jewelry. Use a new toothbrush and store it in a clean area away from other toothbrushes. Once healed, brush jewelry more thoroughly to avoid plaque build-up.
- Slowly eat small bites of food placed directly onto your molars. Avoid eating spicy, salty, acidic, or hot temperature foods or beverages for a few days. Cold foods and beverages are soothing and help reduce swelling.
- Check that the threaded ends of the jewelry are on securely. Tighten them periodically to ensure the jewelry stays in place (Righty-tighty, lefty-loosey).
- Do not play with your jewelry. Long term effects include permanent damage to teeth, gums, and other oral structures.
- Avoid undue trauma; excessive talking or playing with the jewelry during healing can cause the formation of unsightly and uncomfortable scar tissue, migration, and other complications.
- Avoid smoking and chewing tobacco. These increase risks and lengthen healing times.
- Avoid chewing on gum, fingernails, pencils, sunglasses, and other foreign objects that could harbor bacteria.
- Avoid sharing plates, cups, and eating utensils.
- Avoid using mouthwash and/or toothpastes that contain alcohol or whiteners.
- Avoid oral sexual contact including French (wet) kissing even in long-term monogamous relationships.

GENITAL:

- Genital piercings - especially Prince Alberts, Ampallangs, and Apadravyas - can bleed freely for the first few days. Be prepared.
- Additional cleaning after urination is not necessary.
- Wash hands before touching on (or near) a healing piercing.
- In most cases, you can engage in sexual activity as soon as you feel ready, but maintaining hygiene and avoiding trauma are vital; all sexual activity must be gentle during the healing period.
- Use barriers such as condoms, dental dams, and waterproof bandages, etc. to avoid contact with a partner's bodily fluids, even in long-term monogamous relationships.
- After sexual activity, an additional saline/sea salt soak and cleaning are suggested.

Please don't hesitate to call if you have any questions or concerns about your piercing. If you need us during our off hours, send an email to SacredPiercing@gmail.com.

• 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.

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