



Body Piercing Aftercare

Cleaning Solutions

Use one or both of the following solutions for healing piercings:

- Packaged sterile saline (with no additives, read the label) is a gentle choice for piercing aftercare. If sterile saline is not available in your region, a sea salt solution mixture can be a viable alternative. Dissolve 1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon (.75 to 1.42 grams) of non-iodized (iodine-free) sea salt into one cup (8oz/250 ml) of warm distilled or bottled water. A stronger mixture is not better; a saline solution that is too strong can irritate the piercing.

Cleaning Instructions for Body Piercings

- **WASH** your hands thoroughly prior to cleaning or touching your piercing for any reason.
- **SALINE** soak for five to ten minutes once or more per day. Invert a cup of warm saline solution over the area to form a vacuum. For certain piercings it may be easier to apply using clean gauze or paper towels saturated with saline solution.
- If you don't have access to saline spray, your piercer suggests using soap, gently lather around the piercing and rinse as needed. Avoid using harsh soaps, or soaps with dyes, fragrances, or triclosan.
- **RINSE** thoroughly to remove all traces of the soap from the piercing. It is not necessary to rotate the jewelry through the piercing.
- **DRY** by gently patting with clean, disposable paper products. Cloth towels can harbor bacteria and snag on jewelry, causing injury.

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Professional Body Piercer

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What is normal?

- Initially: some bleeding, localized swelling, tenderness, 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 tissue heals from the outside in, and although it feels fine, the interior remains fragile. 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, keep jewelry in-do not leave it empty.

What To Do

- Wash your hands prior to touching your piercing; leave it alone except when cleaning. During healing, it is not necessary to rotate your jewelry.
- Stay healthy; the healthier your lifestyle, the easier it will be for your piercing to heal. Get enough sleep, and eat a nutritious diet. Exercise during healing is fine; listen to your body.
- Make sure your bedding is washed and changed regularly. Wear clean, comfortable, breathable clothing that protects your piercing while you are sleeping.
- Showers tend to be safer than taking baths, as bathtubs can harbor bacteria. If you bathe in a tub, clean it well before each use and rinse off your piercing when you get out.

What To Avoid

- Avoid moving jewelry in an unhealed piercing, or picking away dried discharge with your fingers.
- Avoid cleaning with Betadine®, Hibiciens®, Alcohol, and Hydrogen Peroxide, Dial® or other soaps containing triclosan, as these can damage cells. Also avoid ointments, as they can prevent necessary air circulation.
- Avoid Bactine®, pierced ear care solutions and other products containing Banzalkonium 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 friction from clothing, excessive motion of the area, playing with 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 unhygienic bodies of water such as lakes, pools, hot tubs, etc. Or, protect your piercing using a waterproof wound-sealant bandage (such as 3M™ Nexcare™ Clean Seals). These are available at most drugstores.
- 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.

Any questions, or concerns, please contact your piercer or the studio.

At the first sign of infection or an allergic reaction, and report resulting from the tattoo to the artist and to the Texas Department of State Health Services, Drugs and Medical Devices Group, at 1-888-839-6676.