

Piercing Aftercare Sheet

Once you leave the studio it is your responsibility to take care of your new piercing. This sheet will give you all of the information you need but if you have any questions or concerns at all please get in contact with us, we are happy to help!

It is very common for fresh piercings to be red, tender and swollen - the area may even bruise! This should gradually go down and taking anti-inflammatories such as ibuprofen may help. The piercing is likely to produce a cream/pink/clear discharge which forms a crust once dry, this is perfectly normal and will stop once the piercing is fully healed.

Cleaning:

To clean your piercing, you will need to purchase a sterile saline solution or spray (I would suggest the brand NeilMed). I would not recommend making your own saline solution as it is very difficult to get the ratio perfect and make it safe for a fresh wound. You should clean your piercing at least once per day (twice is recommended) and you may need to clean it after certain activities such as exercising. Before cleaning your piercing, wash your hands thoroughly. You can either clean your piercing by spraying the solution directly onto the piercing area (holding the spray at least 2 inches away) and loosening any build-up with a cotton bud. Alternatively, you can spray/apply the solution onto a cotton bud and use that to gently clean the area. There is no need to twist or move the jewellery during cleaning or healing.



Avoid using anything other than a sterile saline solution or spray to clean your piercing, do not use rubbing alcohol, hydrogen peroxide or antibiotic ointments. These will only irritate your piercing and prolong the healing process. Try not to touch or move your jewellery unless necessary and be very careful not to catch it when changing, showering, etc. Try to sleep on the opposite side of your piercing. Shared water such as the sea, swimming pools, jacuzzis and hot tubs should be avoided during healing, cover the piercing with a waterproof dressing if you are going to enter any body of water. Body lotions and perfumes need to be kept away from the piercing until healed to decrease the chance of irritation and/or infection.

Downsizing:

Below is a table showing each piercing and their approximate downsizing and healing times:

<u>Piercing:</u>	<u>Downsizing time (approximate):</u>	<u>Healing time (approximate):</u>
Lobe	6 weeks+	2 to 3 months
Helix, conch, tragus rook, forward helix, anti-tragus, snug and scaffold	2 months+	6 months to 1 year
Bridge and eyebrow	6 weeks+	2 to 4 months
Nostril and daith	Doesn't require downsizing	6 months to 1 year
Septum	Doesn't require downsizing	2 to 3 months
Lip (including vertical labret)	2 weeks+	2 to 3 months
Tongue and tongue web	2 weeks+	6 to 8 weeks
Navel and nipple	2 months+	6 months to 1 year
Microdermal	Doesn't require downsizing	3 to 6 months

Initial piercing jewellery is longer to accommodate swelling. After the swelling has gone down, it is important to downsize to a shorter bar to give the piercing the best chance of healing perfectly. The table above shows the approximate time of your jewellery change depending on the piercing you have. Some signs that you need to downsize include: seeing excess jewellery at the back/front of the piercing, jewellery moving around freely and catching it on clothes, hair, etc. More frequently. If you think you are ready for a shorter bar, make an appointment to get it changed where we will also check the healing of your piercing. Some issues from not downsizing appropriately include prolonged healing times, irritation bumps and diagonal piercing angles.

Oral Piercings:

Oral piercings typically swell considerably so it may be necessary to suck/chew on ice to help decrease the swelling and sooth the area. Sleeping with your head in a slightly elevated position will also help with swelling, you can do this by using more pillows. Anti-inflammatories such as ibuprofen will also help! However, avoid blood thinners such as aspirin and decrease your caffeine and alcohol intake.

Similarly to other piercings, avoid unnecessary touching and moving of the jewellery as this may cause irritation and prolong the healing process. It is recommended to regularly check that the balls of your piercing are secured tightly, wash your hands thoroughly or use disposable gloves, hold each end of the jewellery and twist the balls in opposite directions.

To clean an oral piercing you will need to use either bottled water or alcohol-free mouthwash. Rinse thoroughly after eating, drinking anything apart from bottled water and smoking. For lip piercings you will also need to use a sterile saline spray or solution to clean the outside of the piercing using a cotton bud. Put the solution onto a cotton bud and gently clean around the outside of the piercing, loosening any crust formations (do this at least once a day).

Avoid wet kissing and unprotected oral sex during the healing process. As it is an open wound you do not want bacteria and any bodily fluids to enter the piercing as this may cause infection.

Dermal Piercings:

Once your microdermal or surface piercing is done, we will cover it with a wound dressing which should stay one for a week or until it falls off naturally. When the piercing is covered you do not need to do anything else and you can leave it alone until it is exposed. Once the dressing is off, clean the piercing as mentioned above at least once a day. Saline solution soaks are also advised during the healing process and can help reduce irritation. You can do this by soaking a cotton pad with the saline solution and holding it on top of the piercing for at least 2 to 3 minutes (you can do it for longer if preferred).

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