PIERCING AFTERCARE INSTRUCTIONS

Please remember new piercings are **open wounds**. It is **extremely** important to keep them clean and take care of them properly to avoid potential infection or improper healing.

Do **not** touch your new piercing unless you are performing aftercare or changing your jewelry. Hands come in contact with many surfaces which may transmit bacteria on a daily basis, i.e. money, door knobs, etc. Touching your piercing with dirty hands is the #1 way to cause an infection. You should wash your hands prior with unscented liquid anti-bacterial soap (Dial Gold). Do **not** let anyone else touch your piercing with dirty hands. Do **not** pick or scratch your new piercing. It may be uncomfortable and itchy, but this is normal in early healing. Leave it alone!

**Avoid** any contact with chlorinated water. **Avoid** ponds, lakes, pools, or hot tubs. These pools of water house bacteria which will almost certainly lead to infection. **Avoid** the following while your piercing is in the healing stage: sleeping on the location of the piercing, rough housing or other activities which will potentially bump, rub, or otherwise irritate the piercing site. This could cause keloiding or scarring. **Avoid** putting anything with make-up, scents or dyes on your piercing. The chemicals in those products may irritate the wound.

You should shower normally, **avoiding** scented body wash or scrubbing your piercing. Be aware of using anything abrasive to wash your piercing, such as a washcloth which may catch on the piercing. Gently hand-wash the area with care using unscented liquid anti-bacterial soap. **Rinse piercing thoroughly**, soap is only effective if it’s rinsed away after cleaning. Wash your piercing and the jewelry (without removing jewelry) 2-3 times a day with anti bacterial soap. You can speed up the healing process by using H2Ocean sea salt spray, but make sure to wash with antibacterial soap after you use the spray and rinse THOROUGHLY. Oral piercings such as tongue piercings, labret piercings, and other lip piercings should rinse with 50/50 antiseptic **non-alcoholic** mouthwash & water OR H2Ocean mouthwash for no more than 30 seconds, especially after eating or smoking or drinking (4-5 times per day). If it isn’t bottled water, rinse your mouth out. It’s also recommended that you get a new toothbrush to cut back on the chance of bacteria in your mouth.

Clean your piercing after any physical workout. **Avoid** activities which may cause your piercing to get exposed to dirt, oil, grease, chemicals, or any other irritants.

As a normal part of the healing process, a white to yellow discharge will be released from the piercing hole. This can form a crust on the piercing so be sure to wash this away daily. **Avoid** Neosporin and other triple antibiotic ointments. **Avoid** such common mistakes as the use of: isopropyl (rubbing) alcohol, hydrogen peroxide, Betadine, or other similar home remedies. **Do not clean your piercing with BACTINE. Bactine is not meant for puncture wounds and states so on the bottle.**

It is also important to consider the affects of the clothing worn during the healing process and to dress accordingly. It is a good idea to wear loose fitting clothes made of non-irritating material such as cotton. Tight fitting or rough clothing such as wool should be **avoided** to aid in healing and reduce local irritation. A common problem in this area arises when high cut jeans are worn with a new navel piercing causing a constant source of pressure and irritation to the piercing. Low cut or hip hugger style jeans are a much better choice.

Body piercings, because of their very nature, take an incredibly long time to heal and are extremely prone to bacterial infections, allergic reactions, or rejection of the jewelry. Healing times for body piercings can vary considerably depending on many factors ranging from the location of the piercing to variations in individual physiological factors; they can also be
lengthened by other irritations. The healing periods listed below are generalized, and do not include the extended healing times to be able to take your jewelry out and leave it out for long periods without closing.

Some of the average healing times for body piercings include:

- eyebrow piercings: 8 weeks
- ear lobe piercings: 8 weeks
- ear cartilage piercings: up to 1 year
- tongue piercings: 4 weeks
- navel piercings: 6-8 months
- nipple piercings: 6 months or longer
- female genital piercings: 6-8 months
- male genital piercings: 6-8 months
- nostril piercings: 2-4 weeks
- septum piercings: 1 month
- lip piercings: 2-4 weeks
- surface piercings: up to 6 months

SURFACE PIERCINGS because of their very nature are extremely prone to migrate out over time.

These healing times are averages and can quite commonly be as much as two or three times as long. With this in mind, the necessity of cleanliness becomes quite obvious. When changing out body jewelry, the new jewelry, regardless of its origin, should be soaked in 70% isopropyl alcohol for a period of 3 minutes immediately prior to being inserted in the piercing.

For the amount of time listed above please follow the suggested aftercare instructions. The better you take care of your piercing, the better it will heal. Furthermore, don’t listen to your friends when it comes to healing this new addition to your body, listen to the professionals. Protect your investment.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact your piercer at 910.346.2059 or message us at elitetattooreception@gmail.com with the subject: AFTERCARE. If needed, we do offer free jewelry changes. Chances are, if you loved your piercing when you left the shop, and it happens to get irritated or infected, it’s the way your body is healing the piercing, and not the way the piercer performed the procedure. Body jewelry is a foreign object in your skin. Understanding this is important. We would much rather you come back to us for a consultation with your body piercer to discuss options with your piercing than throw money away somewhere else. Thank you for choosing Elite Tattoo Gallery!