

SURFACE ANCHORS:

Continuous maintenance is necessary for these piercings throughout their lifespan, as matter accumulation under the threaded top can lead to irritation. Saline rinses or shower rinses can aid in the removal of matter from beneath the threaded top. Refrain from applying makeup to these piercings, even after they have healed.

Despite diligent care, surface anchors may have a shorter lifespan compared to other body piercings.

ALTERNATIVE AFTERCARE CONSIDERATIONS

If sterile saline isn't accessible in your area, a sea salt solution can serve as a suitable alternative. Mix 1/4 teaspoon of non-iodized, fine-grain sea salt into one cup to 250ml of warm distilled or bottled water. Remember, a stronger mixture isn't necessarily better; an overly concentrated solution can irritate the piercing. If DIY saline solution causes irritation - discontinue use.

**THANK YOU FOR TRUSTING STAY SHARP!
IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, GET IN TOUCH!**

*Disclaimer: 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. Be aware that many doctors have not received specific training regarding piercing. Your local piercer may be able to refer you to a piercing-friendly medical professional.

Use of this brochure does not imply membership in the APP. A current list of APP members can be found at safepiercing.org. False claims of membership should be reported to the APP. In the interest of full transparency, we are not APP members at this time due to structural restrictions, but adhere to jewelry standards which we are happy to validate with mil certificates upon request.

Your _____ piercing

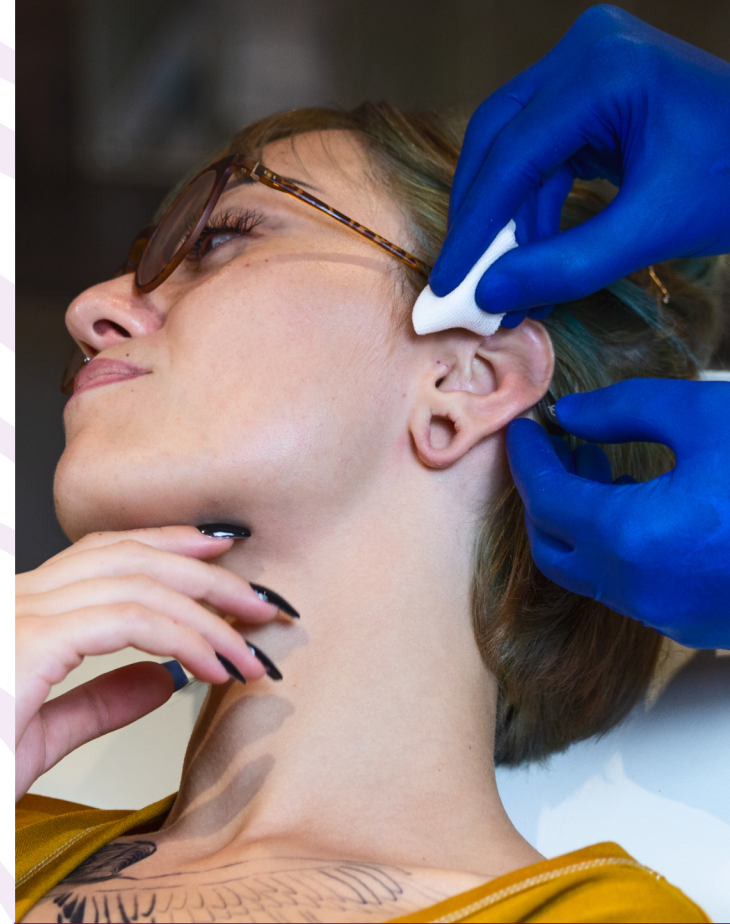
is expected to take _____ or longer to heal.

Piercer: _____

Jewelry: _____

Earliest Change/Downsize Date: _____

For any additional information contact your piercer.



**PIERCING
AFTERCARE
GUIDELINES**



CLEANING SOLUTIONS

• Packaged sterile saline is a gentle choice for piercing aftercare. Mixing your own sea salt solution is no longer a suggested practice from the APP. We strongly encourage you to use a sterile saline labeled for use as a wound wash. Contact lens saline, eye drops, and other saline products should never be used on a body piercing. Your saline ingredients should list .09% sodium chloride as the only ingredient. Mixing your own sea salt solution will commonly result in the product being far too salty and strong, this can over dry the piercing and interfere with healing.

CLEANING INSTRUCTIONS FOR BODY PIERCINGS

Ensure thorough hand washing-before cleaning or touching your piercing.



Use sterile saline rinses as required during the healing process. For some piercings, it might be simpler to apply with clean gauze soaked in saline solution.

Rinse the site as necessary to eliminate any residue from cleaning solutions. Avoid moving or rotating jewelry during cleaning or rinsing. Dry gently by patting with clean, disposable paper products. Cloth towels can harbor bacteria and may catch on jewelry, potentially causing injury. Loofa's/ scrubbing sponges should be avoided at all costs!

WHAT TO EXPECT:

- Initially, there may be some bleeding, localized swelling, tenderness, and/or bruising.
- During the healing process, you might notice discoloration, itching, and the secretion of a whitish-yellow fluid (not pus) that can form crust around the jewelry.
- Tissue may tighten around the jewelry as it heals. Once fully healed, the jewelry may feel less mobile in the piercing; avoid forcing it. Neglecting piercing cleaning in your daily hygiene routine may lead to the accumulation of normal but odorous bodily secretions.
- Healing may appear complete before the process finishes because tissue heals from the outside in, so while it may feel fine, the interior remains delicate.
- Be patient and maintain cleaning throughout the initial healing period. Even healed piercings can contract or close rapidly, varying by individual; if you want to keep your piercing, always wear jewelry—never leave the hole empty.

OVERALL HEALTH

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle contributes to smoother healing for your piercing. Prioritize sufficient sleep and nourish your body with a nutritious diet to support healing and enhance your infection-fighting capabilities.

Don't forget to stay hydrated as well! It's essential for overall health and can also aid in the healing process of your piercing.

WHAT TO AVOID

- Refrain from using alcohol, hydrogen peroxide, antibacterial soaps, iodine, or any harsh products for cleaning, as they can harm cells. Avoid ointments as they inhibit necessary air circulation.
- Steer clear of Bactine®, pierced ear care solutions, and other products containing Benzalkonium Chloride (BZK), as they can be irritating and are not meant for long-term wound care.
- Resist the urge to over-clean, as this can impede healing and irritate the piercing.
- Minimize trauma by avoiding friction from clothing, excessive movement of the area, playing with the jewelry, and vigorous cleaning, as these actions can lead to unsightly scar tissue, migration, prolonged healing, and other complications.
- Refrain from oral contact, rough play, and contact with others' bodily fluids on or near the piercing during the healing period.
- Reduce stress and avoid recreational drug use, including excessive caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol.
- Prevent submerging the piercing in unhygienic bodies of water such as lakes, pools, hot tubs, etc., or use a waterproof wound-sealant bandage for protection, particularly for nipple, navel, and surface piercings.
- Avoid applying any beauty or personal care products on or around the piercing, including cosmetics, lotions, and sprays.
- Refrain from hanging charms or any objects from your jewelry until the piercing is fully healed.
- To prevent irritation, avoid sleeping directly on a healing cartilage piercing. Placing a travel pillow on top of your regular pillow and positioning your ear in the opening can help alleviate pressure.

JEWELRY

If there are no concerns regarding the size, style, or material of the initial jewelry, keep it in position throughout the entire healing period. Seek assistance from a qualified piercer to address any necessary jewelry changes during the healing process.

Initially, your piercing is performed with jewellery that is slightly longer or larger in diameter to accommodate for potential swelling of the surrounding tissue and for cleaning. Once the swelling has subsided, please see your piercer to have your downsize.

¹"Nutrition Guidelines to Improve Wound Healing" Cleveland Clinic 2008. 4 Jan. 2013

http://my.clevelandclinic.org/healthy_living/nutrition/hic_nutrition_guidelines_to_improve_wound_healing.aspx

- 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 that you have had for years can shrink or close in minutes! If removed, reinsertion can be difficult or impossible. See the APP brochure Preparing for Medical and Dental Procedures for more information.

- With clean hands or paper products, be sure to regularly check threaded and threadless ends on your jewelry for tightness.

- 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 mark should remain.

- In the event an infection is suspected, quality jewelry or an inert alternative may be left in place to allow for drainage of the infection, if approved by your physician. On rare occasion, when the jewelry is removed, the surface cells close up, which can seal the infection inside the piercing channel and result in an abscess. Until an infection is cleared up, discuss with your physician if you should leave in quality jewelry or an appropriate substitute.

FOR PARTICULAR AREAS

NAVEL:

- A hard, vented eye patch (sold at pharmacies) can be applied under tight clothing (such as nylon stockings) or secured using a length of elastic bandage around the body (to avoid irritation from adhesive). This can protect the area from restrictive clothing, excess irritation, and impact during physical activities such as contact sports.

EAR/EAR CARTILAGE AND FACIAL:

- Employ the t-shirt trick: Cover your pillow with a large, fresh t-shirt and rotate it nightly; each clean surface ensures hygienic sleeping.
- Ensure cleanliness of items like phones, headphones, eyeglasses, helmets, and hats that come into contact with the pierced area.
- Exercise caution when styling your hair, and inform your stylist about any new or healing piercings.

NIPPLE:

- Wearing a snug cotton shirt or sports bra can offer protection and comfort, particularly while sleeping. If you can sleep on your side, this is recommended.

GENITAL:

Genital piercings, especially Triangles, Prince Alberts, Ampallangs, and Apadravyas, may bleed freely during the initial days, so be prepared. Extra cleaning after urination isn't necessary.

Remember to wash your hands before touching or coming near a healing piercing. While you might feel ready for sexual activity, prioritize hygiene and avoid causing trauma. Be gentle during all sexual activities throughout the healing process.

Use barriers like condoms, dental dams, and waterproof bandages to prevent contact with your partner's body fluids, even in long-term monogamous relationships. Employ clean, disposable barriers on sex toys, and always opt for fresh water-based lubricant, avoiding saliva. Consider an additional saline rinse post-sexual activity.