

# Tattoo Care

How do I care for my new tattoo?

**Estimated Healing Time For Your New Tattoo:** *Everyone heals at a different rate. You can expect your new tattoo to take approximately two weeks to heal on the surface and up to two months to heal completely.*

- Wash your hands! Before and after touching your tattoo
- Remove bandage in a clean environment within 1-3 hrs. Immediately wash tattoo with a mild, liquid antibacterial soap. Do not re-bandage! Your new tattoo is an open wound and must “breathe”.
- Wash the tattooed area gently 2-3 times daily. **DO NOT scrub!** Pat dry with a clean, disposable paper towel.
- After cleaning, apply a thin coat of the aftercare product of your choice (preferable a lotion formulated to soothe and moisturize dry/rough skin) to the tattooed area. Rub the product in well. If the area appears glossy, then you have applied too much.
- Apply the aftercare product periodically throughout the day as needed to keep the area from drying out being careful not to over-saturate your new tattoo, as it may prolong healing time.
- We suggest using a lotion-based aftercare for your new tattoo. However, should you choose to use an ointment-based product instead, switch to a mild, fragrance-free, dye-free lotion within 24-48 hours.
- **DO NOT** use Vaseline, Neosporin, Noxzema, Bactine, etc on the tattooed area.
- If a scab should form, **DO NOT PICK AT IT!** This could “pull out” parts of your tattoo!

**Your Tattoo Has Been Done Appropriately. Now it’s Up To You!**

*The risk of infection is minimal if the aftercare is followed closely. We have found that most problems or infections occur when:*

- The tattoo is handled without first washing hands.
- Too much, too many, or inappropriate products are used for cleaning a healing.
- When subjected to harsh chemicals or conditions (chlorine pools, direct sunlight, tanning, etc).
- Simply not following aftercare advice.

# Tattoo Removal

The tattoo removal laser treatment may create a superficial burn wound. Some patients may experience bruising or swelling. There is immediate whitening of the treated area, which usually lasts for several minutes.

Many clients then develop blisters, crusts, or scabs within 8-72 hours, which may last for 1-2 weeks or more. The treated areas may be pink or pale after the scab separates. Scarring, which can be hypertrophic or even keloid, can occur but is very rare.

Loss of skin pigment in the treated area can occur, and is temporary except in very rare cases. Healing is usually complete within 4 weeks, although this may vary.

- Keep the treated area clean and dry while it is healing. Clean the area gently with soap and water and then pat the area dry. You may apply a thin coating of antibiotic ointment up to three times a day for 3 days while the area is healing and you should keep the area covered with a sterile dressing for those 3 days.
- Blistering is common and is likely to occur 8 hours after your treatment. Do not be alarmed, blisters heal very well and are part of the normal healing process. Blisters indicate your immune system is healing the area and beginning to remove the ink from your tattoo. It is natural for blisters to pop, and this helps the skin to heal faster in many cases. Continue to put antibiotic ointment over the blisters once they have popped for at least 24 hours.
- You may apply cool compresses as necessary for 24 hours after the laser treatment to help reduce discomfort and inflammation. You may take plain Tylenol, but avoid aspirin (it can increase the risk of bruising and/or bleeding.)
- Do not pick at the scab or allow the skin to become scraped, as this may result in infection and scarring. Shaving should be avoided in the treated area until it is completely healed.
- Feel free to shower 2 hours after the treatment, but take care to avoid high pressure water hitting the treated area. Baths, hot tubs, swimming pool, or any form of soaking are not recommended until all blistering and scabbing are completely healed, as they may increase the risk of infection.
- Exercise is generally safe after treatment, taking into account the other after care instructions provided here.
- Wear a sun block with an SPF of 25 or higher over the area for 3 months following the treatment. Do not wear makeup or any cream or medication on or near the treated area unless recommended by our office for 48 hours.

- Itching is very common due to the dehydrating effect of the laser treatment. Use Aquaphor, vitamin E ointment, or hydrocortisone cream to the treatment area.
- If the area looks infected (honey colored crusting and oozing or spreading redness), if you experience an unusual discomfort or bleeding, if any other complications develop, or if you have any questions or concerns, contact the office immediately.
- Of course, if you have any extreme reaction, call 911 and go to the emergency department.

# Body Piercing

## What do I use to clean my piercing?

A mild, fragrance free liquid soap-preferably anti-microbial or germicidal.

## How often do I clean my piercing?

Clean your piercing TWICE daily. Clean it once in the morning and once before bed. Over cleaning the piercing is just as bad as under cleaning.

## How do I clean my piercing?

Before you clean you lip/cheek piercing make sure you clean your hands with germicidal/antimicrobial soap and warm water. NEVER touch your piercing with dirty hands. After washing your hands, clean off the crust that has built up on the outside of your piercing. This is best done with warm water and a cotton swab. DO NOT SKIP THIS STEP. Apply some antimicrobial or germicidal soap to the area and the jewelry and move the jewelry back and forth. This helps work some of the soap into the piercing. After rotating the jewelry, rinse off the excess soap off under running water, while rotating the jewelry back and forth. This is best done in the shower. Pat dry the area with disposable paper such as gauze.

### **How long will my piercing take to heal?**

Each and every person on this planet is unique. Some people heal faster than others. Please be patient. You are an individual unlike anyone else so don't compare yourself to others! Generally piercings take six to eight weeks or longer to heal.

### **Why is my piercing bruised/bleeding?**

Any piercing can periodically bleed for a few days. Sometimes there is bleeding under the tissue surrounding the piercing which causes discoloration. This is nothing to worry about.

### **What is the "yellow stuff" that is coming out of my piercing?**

That "yellow stuff" is a secretion that contains lymph and dead cells. This is perfectly normal. This is NOT a problem but rather an indication of a healing piercing.

### **When can I "play" with my piercing?**

Make sure you leave the piercing alone except when you are cleaning it during the initial healing period.

### **How long do I have to keep my piercing in before taking it out?**

If you like your piercing you do not need to take it out, ever. Some people assume that they can take out their jewelry and reinsert it with no problem. This is not the case. I have seen piercings that have been in place for years close in a matter of minutes. Some experimentation is suggested.

### **Is there anything I can do to speed up the healing process?**

Get a good amount of sleep and eat a nutritious diet. Avoid stress. This helps with your life as well as your piercing. The better you take care of your body the better your body will take care of you.

### **Do I have to wear “special” clothing?**

Make sure the clothing you wear is clean and comfortable. The clothes should allow the piercing room to “breathe.” Avoid constrictive clothing.

### **Can I take baths?**

Showering is much better for your piercing. If you must take a bath, make sure you thoroughly clean out the tub BEFORE you enter. Rinse the tub to remove whatever cleaning agent you used then proceed with your bath. Make sure you rinse the piercing off when you are done.

### **My piercing is secreting a thick, pus-like discharge. What does this mean?**

If your piercing is secreting a thick pus-like discharge INSTEAD of the normal secretion, you may wish to consult a physician for treatment. If it is diagnosed as an infection, try to leave your jewelry in. By keeping the jewelry in you are keeping a pathway open for the discharge of pus. If the pathway closes, you may develop an abscess.

### **May I anything to clean my piercing?**

**DO NOT** use peroxide, alcohol, Betadine, Bactine, or Hibiclens. These cleaners are very strong and actually slow down the healing process.

### **What kind of ointment should I use on my piercing?**

**DO NOT** use any ointment on your piercing. Ointments prevent oxygen from getting to your piercing. Allow your piercing to “breathe.”

### **What should I avoid doing with this piercing?**

Avoid **ALL** oral contact during the healing period. That means no “rough play” or ANY contact with others’ bodily fluids on or near your piercing. This applies to monogamous couples as well.

### **May I put a bandage, ie: Band-Aid, on my piercing?**

**DO NOT** put on Band-Aid or any other latex, vinyl bandage over the piercing. These products block oxygen from getting to your piercing. The adhesive on the bandage could irritate the surrounding area of the piercing.

### **May I go swimming?**

Avoid going into bodies of water such as pools, lakes, rivers, oceans, hot tubs, Jacuzzis, etc. These bodies of water are breeding grounds for bacteria. Adding bacteria to an open wound is NOT good. A new piercing is an open wound.

### **How long before I may “use” my genital piercing?**

As long as you keep the piercing clean sexual activity is NOT a problem. Keeping the piercing clean means using condoms (without Nonoxynol-nine) and dental dams for all sexual contact. This applies to monogamous relationships as well. If you need a lubricant, use water based lubricants such as KY Jelly. If what you are doing is hurting the piercing, STOP! No one can tell you better than your own body. If you take care of your body, your body will take care of you.

### **What if I have any other questions about my piercing?**

If you have any other questions, please don't hesitate to contact me as soon as possible.  
1062 N Milwaukee Ave. Chicago, IL 60622 **ph 773.242.4444**

**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. Keep in mind that the removal of jewelry can lead to further complications. Be aware that many doctors have not received specific training regarding piercing. If you are having problems with a piercing, please **contact us** and we may be able to refer you to a piercing friendly medical or dental professional.*

# Oral Piercing

## What do I use to clean my oral piercing on the **INSIDE** of my mouth?

ANY antimicrobial or antibacterial **ALCOHOL-FREE** mouth rinse. At Insight Studios, we carry *Tech 2000* and *H2Ocean Arctic Rinse*.

## How do I clean the inside of my mouth?

Rinse your mouth for thirty to sixty seconds with the mouth rinse you have selected after **ALL** meals during the **ENTIRE** healing period. Make sure you rinse out with the selected mouth rinse after you put anything in your mouth. If you smoke, rinse out after each cigarette.

## How do I clean the outside of my lip/cheek piercing?

Before you clean you lip/cheek piercing make sure you clean your hands with germicidal/antimicrobial soap and warm water. **NEVER** touch your piercing with dirty hands. After washing your hands, clean off the crust that has built up on the outside of your piercing. This is best done with warm water and a cotton swab. **DO NOT SKIP THIS STEP.** Apply some antimicrobial or germicidal soap to the area and the jewelry and move the jewelry back and forth. This helps work some of the soap into the piercing. After rotating the jewelry, rinse off the excess soap off under running water, while rotating the jewelry back and forth. This is best done in the shower. Pat dry the area with disposable paper such as gauze.

## What can I expect after i get my tongue/lip/cheek pierced?

Your tongue/lip/cheek piercing will swell for approximately three to five days. To reduce the swelling, let small pieces of ice dissolve in your mouth. Crushed ice is best for this. Make sure the pieces are small enough and fit into your mouth comfortably. You may experience some periodic tenderness or discomfort for several days, this is not uncommon.

### **What is the “yellow stuff” that is coming out of my piercing/tongue?**

That “yellow stuff” is a secretion that contains lymph and dead cells. This is perfectly normal. This is **NOT** a problem but rather an indication of a healing piercing.

### **Why is my tongue/lip/cheek bruised/bleeding?**

Any piercing can periodically bleed for a few days. Sometimes there is bleeding under the tissue surrounding the piercing which causes discoloration. This is nothing to worry about.

### **How long will my piercing take to heal?**

Each and every person on this planet is unique. Some people heal faster than others. Please be patient. You are an individual unlike anyone else so don't compare yourself to others! Generally piercings take six to eight weeks or longer to heal.

### **Is there anything I can do to speed up the healing process?**

Get a good amount of sleep and eat a nutritious diet. Avoid stress. This helps with your life as well as your piercing. The better you take care of your body the better your body will take care of you.

### **How long do I have to keep my piercing in before taking it out?**

If you like your piercing you do not need to take it out, ever. Some people assume that they can take out their jewelry and reinsert it with no problem. This is not the case. I have seen piercings that have been in place for years close in a matter of minutes. Some experimentation is suggested.

### **Do I have to leave this jewelry that I got pierced with in? It seems large?**

Once the swelling subsides, you may come in and purchase smaller jewelry. Smaller jewelry is less likely to irritate your mouth and there is less of a chance of biting down on it.

### **Do I have to worry about my jewelry coming loose?**

If you check your jewelry once a day, you will be fine. To check your jewelry, wash your hands with germicidal/antimicrobial and warm water then make sure the ends on the jewelry are secure.

### **What can I eat?**

You may eat anything as long as it does not hurt while you are eating it. Your body will tell you what is best to eat in terms of pain. When chewing food, take small slow bites. Drink plenty of water. This is good for you even after your piercing is healed. DO NOT eat anything that is temperature hot, spicy hot, overly salty, or acidic for several days.

### **What should I avoid doing with this piercing?**

Avoid **ALL** oral contact during the healing period. That means no wet kissing (french) or oral sex. This applies to monogamous couples as well.

### **May I smoke with this piercing?**

Reducing tobacco intake is highly advisable while healing an oral piercing.

### **May I drink with this piercing?**

Avoid large amounts of caffeine and any alcoholic beverages for several days. Alcohol includes beer, wine, and all hard liquors. These can add to additional swelling and discomfort to your oral piercing.

### **When can I play with my piercing?**

During the healing period be gentle with your oral piercing. Normal talking and eating are enough trauma.

## What if I have any other questions about my piercing?

If you have any other questions, please don't hesitate to contact me as soon as possible.

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