

Body Piercing

Before the Service:

- Perform hand hygiene.
- Ensure that any part of the client's body to be treated is clean and free from cuts, rash, fungus, or visible skin disease.
- All supplies and equipment required for piercing are to be assembled and set up immediately prior to starting the procedure.
- An approved sharps container must be located in areas where needles and sharps are used.

You do not have to see blood or bodily fluids on instruments for an infection to occur.

Equipment:

- All jewelry used for body piercing must be sterile. Any modified jewelry must be cleaned (e.g., ultrasonic cleaner), packaged and sterilized by an acceptable method (refer to *Sterilization* information sheet).
- Sterile items are to remain in its sterile package until use and in view of the client just prior to service. Sterile packages are to be carefully stored in a clean, dry, and dust-free area (e.g., closed shelves, not at floor level, at least 1 metre (3 feet) away from debris, drains, moisture, sinks) to prevent contamination.
- Single-use sterile items that become contaminated (e.g., touch a person or contact any other surface prior to use) cannot be used, and must be discarded and immediately replaced with another sterile item. Reusable sterile items that become contaminated must be cleaned and sterilized before re-use.
- If pre-packaged sterile items are used, records of all information are required on-site for tracking purposes (i.e., proof of sterility, name of company that sterilizes the needles, lot numbers, invoices / receipts, expiry dates if applicable, etc.). **Any sterile items without records may be seized by the Public Health Inspector at time of inspection.**
- Single-use, disposable, sterile needles must be used and discarded in an approved sharps container immediately after each use.
- All reusable equipment (e.g., ring opening / closing pliers, calipers, needle pushers, insertion tapers, connectors, open-ended receiving tubes, forceps, etc.) must be cleaned and then sterilized by an acceptable method (refer to *Sterilization* information sheet).
- Equipment and instruments that cannot be properly cleaned and disinfected between clients are single use (e.g., dermal punch, closed ended receiving tubes, cork, elastics, etc.).
- Topical anesthetic may be used on a client; however, injectable anesthetics are not to be used.

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Durham Health Connection Line | 905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729 | Dial 311 (within regional limits)
durham.ca/KnowBeforeYouGo



This information is available in accessible format, contact 1-800-841-2729.

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Source: Guide to Infection Prevention and Control in Personal Service Settings, Public Health Ontario, July 2019. DUHEV-215 Aug 2025

- All equipment, instruments, and jewelry that require sterilization must be cleaned and packaged either disassembled (e.g., jewelry) or in the open position (e.g., clamps).
- Clean marking materials (e.g., single use iodine felt tip pen, iodine, or gentian violet with toothpick) must be used to mark piercing sites. Follow the marking procedure below:
 - ✓ clean site to be pierced with approved skin antiseptic*
 - ✓ mark site
 - ✓ let the area dry for one minute
 - ✓ clean site again with approved skin antiseptic just prior to piercing

*Approved skin antiseptics: povidone-iodine solution, isopropyl alcohol 50-91%, ethyl alcohol 60-95% (by volume), chlorhexidine gluconate 2-4% (except around eyes, inner ear or on mucous membranes), chlorhexidine 0.5 % with 70 % alcohol, or benzalkonium chloride (BZK) 0-0.13% weight per volume (w/v).

Sterilization:

- Only sterilizers/autoclaves that meet standards by Health Canada and Canadian Standards Association are approved for use (refer to the *Sterilization, Chemical & Physical Monitoring of Sterilizer, Biological Monitoring of Sterilizer* and *Sterilization Log Sheet* information sheets). If in doubt, pre-packaged, sterile equipment and instruments must be purchased and used.

Client Records:

- Client records must be kept on-site for all invasive services, and must include date of service, client's contact information (full name, address, telephone number), details of the service, procedure and risks associated with the service were explained to the client, aftercare instructions were given, lot numbers and expiry date (if applicable) of the pre-packaged sterile equipment used in the procedure, and the service provider's full name.
- Records must be kept on file for a minimum of 1 year on-site, and thereafter for a minimum of an additional 2 years (on-site or off-site).

After Care:

- Clients must be given verbal and written information regarding piercing aftercare including:
 - ✓ Clean hands immediately before touching the site
 - ✓ Provide expected healing time of the site
 - ✓ Advice on how to deal with slight redness, pain or swelling
 - ✓ Describe possible complications and their signs and symptoms
 - ✓ Recommend consultation with a family physician within 24 hours if any infection develops following the procedure
 - ✓ Cover the modified area, where applicable, with single-use dressing intended to cover wounds
 - ✓ Ointment may be applied to help prevent infection



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