

# Earlobe Piercing

## Before the Service:

- Ear piercing instruments shall not be used on any other part of the body except the fleshy part of the ear lobe.
- Perform hand hygiene. Inspect the skin. Do not pierce inflamed or infected skin or skin with a rash.
- All supplies and equipment required for piercing are to be assembled and set up immediately prior to starting the procedure.

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

## Equipment:

- Ear piercing instruments without sterile, single-use disposable adapters or cartridges that come in direct contact with the ear during the procedure must be cleaned and sterilized between each client (refer to the *Sterilization* information sheet).
- Ear piercing instruments must be loaded without touching either the sterile jewelry or the stud-holding sterile (disposable) devices on the gun.
- All jewelry used for ear piercing must be pre-packaged, sterile. Jewelry cannot be sampled or returned. Jewelry must remain sterile until use. Do not spray any sterile item with disinfectant (i.e., alcohol, etc.).
- Ear piercing instruments that use single-use sterile adapters or cartridges must be cleaned and then disinfected (intermediate level) between clients (refer to the *Cleaning, Disinfection & Sterilization Flowchart*).
- Equipment and instruments that cannot be properly cleaned and disinfected between clients are single use (e.g., plastic adapters, toothpicks, cotton, etc.).
- 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).

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- After each client, all disposable parts must be discarded. Any open packages are no longer sterile and must be discarded. **Any open packages of previously sterile items stored with sterile packages will be seized during inspection.**
- The cleaned and disinfected piercing instrument and all sterile packages must be stored in a sanitary manner.
- If pre-packaged, sterile items are provided, 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, expiry dates if applicable, invoices / receipts, etc.). **Any sterile items without records may be seized by the Public Health Inspector at time of inspection.**

## 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 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
  - ✓ Advice on how to deal with slight redness, pain or swelling
  - ✓ Discuss the expected healing time of the site
  - ✓ Describe possible complications and their signs and symptoms
  - ✓ Recommend consultation with a family physician within 24 hours if any signs of an infection develop following the procedure
  - ✓ Ointment may be applied to help prevent infection



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