

Cleaning solutions

Non-iodized sea salt mixture: dissolve ¼ teaspoon of non iodized (iodine free) sea salt into one cup of (250ml/8oz) of distilled water or bottled water. A stronger mixture is not better, a saline solution that is too strong and irritate a new piercing.

And/or antimicrobial or antibacterial alcohol-free mouth rinse.

Cleaning instructions for inside the mouth

Rinse mouth with cleaning solution for 30 seconds after meals and at bedtime (4-5 times daily) during the entire healing period. Cleaning too often or with too strong a rinse can cause discoloration and irritation of your mouth and piercing.

Cleaning instruction for the exterior of labret (cheek and lip) piercings

WASH your hands thoroughly prior to cleaning or touching your piercing for any reason

SALINE soak at least 2-3 times a day. A brief rinse afterward will remove any residue.

SOAP no more than once or twice daily. While showering lather soap to clean the jewelry and piercing.

RINSE thoroughly to remove all traces of soap.

DRY by gently patting with clean disposable paper towel. Cloth towels can harbor bacteria and snag on jewelry causing injury.

What is normal?

For the first 3-5 days: significant swelling, light bleeding, bruising and/or tenderness.

After that: some swelling, light secretion of a whitish-yellow fluid (not pus)

A piercing may seem healed before the healing process is complete. This is because they heal from the outside in, and although it feels fine, the tissue remains fragile on the inside. Be patient, and keep cleaning throughout the entire healing period.

Even healed piercings can shrink or close in minutes. This varies for everyone. If you like your piercing keep your jewelry in.

What to do

To help reduce swelling:

- Allow small pieces of ice to dissolve in the mouth
- Take an over the counter, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory such as ibuprofen
- Don't speak or move jewelry more than necessary
- Sleep with your head elevated above your heart the first few nights
- The healthier your lifestyle, the easier it will be for your piercing to heal.

To maintain good oral hygiene:

- Use a new soft-bristled toothbrush and store it in a clean area
- Brush your teeth and use your chosen rinse (saline or mouthwash) after every meal
- During healing floss daily and gently brush your teeth, tongue and jewelry. Once healed, brush the jewelry more thoroughly to avoid plaque build up

Jewelry:

- Once the swelling has subsided, it is vital to replace the original, longer jewelry with a shorter post to avoid intra-oral damage. Consult your piercer for their downsize policy.
- Because this necessary jewelry change often occurs during healing, it should be done by a qualified piercer.

Eating:

- Slowly eat small bites of food placed directly onto your molars
- Avoid eating spicy, salty, acidic or hot temperature foods or beverages for a few days
- Cold foods and beverages are soothing and help reduce swelling
- Foods like mashed potatoes or oatmeal are difficult to eat because they stick to your mouth and jewelry
- For tongue piercings, try to keep your tongue level in your mouth as you eat because the jewelry can get caught in your teeth as your tongue moves
- For labret (cheek and lip) piercings be cautious about opening your mouth too wide as this can result in the jewelry catching on your teeth

What to avoid?

Do not play with your jewelry. Long term effects include permanent damage to teeth, gums and other oral structures

Avoid using mouthwash containing alcohol. It can irritate the piercing and delay healing

Avoid any oral sexual contact during healing

Avoid chewing on tobacco, gum, fingernails, pencils, sunglasses and other foreign objects that could harbor bacteria

Avoid smoking. It increases risks and lengthens healing time

Avoid stress and all recreational drug use

Avoid aspirin, alcohol, and large amounts of caffeine as long as you are experiencing bleeding or swelling

Avoid submerging healing piercings in bodies of water such as lakes, pools, etc

Every body is unique and healing times vary considerably.

If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact your piercer 514-723-2676.

This informational brochure is courtesy of Aztec Rituals Tattoo and



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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 or dental professional. For more information, see the APP Brochure *Troubleshooting For You and Your Healthcare Professional*.

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