

## Important

Leave healing piercings alone! The only time you should handle an unhealed piercing is when you are cleaning it!

## Never Use

Alcohol / witch hazel (Purell or other hand sanitizers are also alcohol based and should be avoided), hydrogen peroxide, iodine (Betadine), Bactine, or Hibiclense as these products may damage healing tissue.

Also, stay away from petroleum jelly based antibiotic ointments (Neosporin, Bacatracin, or Triple antibiotic ointments.) These products clog the piercing and delay healing.

## Avoid

- Handling healing piercings with unwashed hands.
- It is also advisable to reduce your intake of spicy foods, caffeine, hot beverages, and cigarettes until your piercing is fully healed.
- Avoid whitening toothpastes or products that contain hydrogen peroxide
- You must avoid open mouth kissing and unprotected oral sex for the entire healing period!!!! This means at least six weeks!**

## Do

- Eat a balanced diet and get plenty of exercise and rest. Healthy bodies heal faster.

## Swelling and Downsizing

Oral piercings can be swollen and sore for 7 to 10 days, sometimes longer. Longer jewelry is used in a new piercing to allow room for swelling. When initial swelling has gone down, return for shorter, more snug-fitting jewelry to avoid dental risks and to continue smooth healing.

Some piercings, such as the cheeks, philtrums, and inverted vertical labrets, may need to be downsized incrementally. These should be checked by your piercer every two to three weeks.

## Keeping Oral Piercings Clean

Sip on cold, ice water for at least the first three days. This will help reduce swelling and soreness. All oral piercings can swell, and swelling can last up to ten days. Be patient! Staying properly hydrated can help with swelling. Drink lots of water!!

The most important part of healing a new oral piercing is maintaining proper dental hygiene. This means brushing your teeth twice a day (after your piercing, get a brand new toothbrush to use throughout the healing,) flossing every day, and after brushing rinse for ten seconds with **Biotene, Crest Pro Health, or Listerine (diluted)** or similar mouthwash. Listerine or other mouthwashes that contain alcohol should be diluted by half with water, if unable to be avoided.

Throughout the day, you must rinse with clean bottled water after smoking, vaping, or ingesting anything that isn't water.

For the outside of lip and cheek piercings, rinse any debris from the jewelry with sterile saline. This can be done two or three times a day with a spray or compress. If spraying, spray onto the piercing and wipe away any loose crusties with clean gauze. If using a compress, hold with pressure onto the piercing for ten minutes twice a day. In the shower, let warm water run over the piercing to ensure any suds that may have gotten onto the piercing are off and soften any stubborn dried debris on the jewelry. DO NOT twist, rotate, remove your jewelry during the healing.