

PIERCING PRE CARE



Pre-Treatment Advice

If sun exposure isn't avoidable, factor 50 must be used and reapplied frequently on the area, we cannot pierce sunburnt skin

Do not drink alcohol or take painkillers 48h before

Avoid excessive caffeine & exercise for 12 hours before

Do not smoke/vape 4hrs before, longer if possible

Do not use retin-A/AHA's/BHA's on the area for 7 days.

Ensure you have eaten well & drank fluids prior to your appointment (this is ESSENTIAL)

Piercing Jewellery

The majority of piercings will be carried out with 'push fit' or 'threadless' jewellery - only barbells will be screw fit. Threadless jewellery consists of a 'stem' and an 'attachment'.

1. The stem goes into the piercing from the back, has a flat disc at the back, and a hollow post that goes through the ear.
2. The attachment is the front, pretty part, which fits into the stem via the 'leg' that is attached to it.
3. The leg has a little crick in it to create resistance then entering the post - it is the resistance that holds it in place. This allows in you to easily change the attachments to suit without being too fiddly! But you will need to make sure there is enough resistance when re-fitting the attachment or it is likely to fall out.

Please familiarise yourself with this style of jewellery to ensure you know to check it's secure, and how to re-fit or change the jewellery if need be. Details for this can be found on our Instagram highlights or by searching for videos of 'fitting thread-less jewellery' on the internet.

Downsize

Once your initial swelling has gone down, please arrange to get your piercing downsized so that the extra length of the bar doesn't cause irritation. If you begin to sleep on a piercing before your downsize you will risk it migrating which is irreparable. This is especially important with 'flat' piercings due to the angle to the head. General initial healing times (do not change any jewellery before this time):

Lobe: 6-8weeks

Cartilage: 10-12 weeks

A note on swelling and your jewellery

Remember that your piercing is highly likely to swell, so we have given you a piece of jewellery with a longer bar, or wider diameter attachment to allow room for swelling. If at any point your jewellery is feeling tight, is looking like it's too short or doesn't have any extra room for swelling contact us immediately to prevent the jewellery from embedding. After about 4-6 weeks you should notice the swelling to be considerably less.

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PIERCING AFTERCARE



How to care for your piercing

Do not touch, twist, turn, or fiddle with your piercing jewellery.

Initial jewellery (inc downsized stem) must stay in place for at least 10-12 weeks with cartilage piercings.

Please be aware that these are periods of initial healing, therefore if you do change your jewellery at the end of this period, be aware your piercing is still healing. Choose quality jewellery and be prepared to put the original jewellery back in if you have any problems. Healing timescales are just as individual as you are.

Do not bathe or soak (this includes swimming) with your new piercing for at least two weeks. Showering is great but soaking in stagnant water increases your chance of infection considerably!

Regularly check that the attachments on your piercing jewellery are secure and pushed in/ screwed on tightly.

Be careful with your piercing - do not bash it, knock it, rub it or catch it. Be mindful when wearing hats/glasses/masks.

Do not sleep on your new cartilage piercing & don't sleep with wet hair .

How to clean your piercing

We recommend using Neilmed Piercing Aftercare fine mist spray, which is available to purchase during your piercing appointment.

Always make sure your hands are clean and simply spray both sides of the piercing with your fine mist spray being mindful not to touch the spray can nozzle to your flesh as this can cause contamination of your spray. Dab any excess moisture from around the piercing but allow the piercing itself to dry naturally.

Repeat this process twice a day until the piercing is settled. Do not manually dislodge any dry scabs - allow them to soften with the aftercare spray and gently wipe away any build up with a fresh and clean cotton bud.

Do not over clean. Your body will do the hard work and heal the piercing wound.

Hints and tips

Store your aftercare spray in the fridge for a cooling effect in the first few days.

Wear a bulky 'crocodile/butterfly' style clip in your hair, above the pierced area, to stop you from rolling on to the piercing in your sleep.

Maintain cleanliness of telephones, headphones, glasses, helmets, hats and anything that may come into contact with the pierced area.

Make sure you tell your hairdresser that you have a new piercing.

PIERCING COMPLICATIONS



Non emergency complications

Piercings are very slow healing wounds. We actually ask a whole lot of the body when we ask it to heal a wound with a foreign object in it that shouldn't be there. Complication can occur at anytime and is usually nothing to be worried about but does need to be addressed. You can contact us at anytime with healing concerns about your piercing but please include as much detail as you can - this includes if you've done something to your piercing you shouldn't have - because we can't help you if we don't know what's really happened.

IMPROPERLY FITTING JEWELLERY: If you have not had your jewellery downsized when you were advised this can cause real problems. If your jewellery is too big you will catch it more, causing redness and bumps. It will become sore to sleep on and may migrate. If extra length on the piercing shaft remains exposed once your initial swelling has gone down, dirt will build up on that portion of the jewellery and can be tracked through the piercing causing inflammation, keeping it in a swollen state. Conversely, wearing jewellery that is too tight can cause cutting and embedding. Many people will desire the "tightest possible fit", but just like with shoes, the tighter doesn't always mean the better.

IMMUNE SUPPORT: Make sure you are eating healthily, exercising, getting enough sleep and taking a multivitamin (especially zinc, vit d3 and vit c)

LUMPS AND BUMPS: Lumps and bumps come in many forms with various causes, the most common cause is the piercing being knocked or the wearer playing with the jewellery. As soon as you notice a small bump forming take a close up, begin using hydrogen peroxide. Dab a small amount on the bump once a day if using 6-9%, or twice a day if using 3-6%. It will fizz! 'No Pull' discs can also be applied.

CHEMICAL IRRITATION: Chemical irritation sounds quite severe but it can literally be any product interacting with your piercing that can make it aggravated. Such as household cleaning products, hair dye and other cosmetics. Even working in a smoky or dusty environment. If you are experiencing chemical irritation please flush your piercing area (do not remove your jewellery) with sterile saline or cleaning running water thoroughly, keep hair pinned off of your piercing and/or wear loose fitted comfortable clothing and change your bedding. The problem should resolve itself within a few days but be vigilant not to repeatedly expose your piercing to an irritant you know to be harmful as it may lead to infection.

Emergency Complications

SEVERE SWELLING AND EMBEDDING: Embedding is when your piercing has become extremely swollen and the jewellery is sinking into the skin. It is normal for your piercing to swell to the full size of your starter jewellery - however if it is actually sinking into and underneath your skin you must return to the studio immediately to have longer jewellery installed. If you are unable to return to the studio for any reason you can try the following things:

Icing your piercing - like any swelling injury, icing may help reduce inflammation particularly if you have experienced trauma to the piercing site. When icing, remember to wrap your ice pack in a clean towel or casing, preventing direct skin contact, and do not ice your piercing for more than 20 minutes per hour.

Anti-inflammatories - Over the counter anti-inflammatories that can be purchased at any pharmacy can be taken in accordance with the manufacturers instructions and any additional medical guidance given by your doctor or pharmacist. Do not take anti-inflammatories if you know or suspect yourself to be allergic or if they contraindicate any medical condition you have.

Retire your piercing - this may not be a favourable option for many but piercing is cosmetic only and this is an option if your piercing is causing you distress. Please ensure both the skin surrounding your piercing and your hands have been cleaned before doing this or wear a fresh pair of nitrile exam gloves.

INFECTION: Most bacterial infections are mild enough that your own healthy immune system is strong enough to fight them off, but in rare cases infection can overwhelm the immune system and become serious, requiring medical intervention as soon as possible.

Signs of potential infection are extreme heat, redness spreading outward from the wound site, extreme swelling, severe pain, thick green or yellow discharge seeping from the piercing, nausea or a fever and swollen lymph nodes.

Severe infection is rare and it's even rarer when you follow the correct aftercare and practise regular hand washing, however it is possible.

If you suspect you have an infection, contact your GP or NHS 24 on 111 who can arrange an appointment with an out of hours GP with you.