



101 Things Every Person Should Know **– BEFORE Getting a Piercing**

You only get one body – it is worth investing in.

(Never assume your government has checked that the person doing your piercing is competent. In many countries “YOU” could become a piercer TODAY if you felt like it - without being trained!)

1. All piercings should be done with a one use only, pre-sterilized needle
2. This needle should only be used on you. Not on your friends or family **EVER.** (This is still happening in 2007!!!)
3. Ask to see the needle in its packet, or in its Statim cassette if your piercer doesn't use sterilization bags. It's either one or the other.

Following is a minimum list of rights you are entitled to concerning being pierced. If your piercer doesn't meet them you can always find one who does.

The Piercee's Bill of Rights

4. To be pierced in a scrupulously hygienic environment, by a clean, conscientious piercer wearing a fresh pair of disposable latex gloves.
5. To a sober, friendly, calm and knowledgeable piercer, who will guide them through their piercing experience with confidence and assurance.
6. To the peace of mind which comes from knowing that their piercer knows and practices the very highest standards of sterilization and hygiene.



7. To be pierced with a brand new, completely sterilized needle, which is immediately disposed of in a medical sharps container after use on the piercee alone.
 8. To be touched only with freshly sterilized, appropriate implements, properly used and disposed of or resterilized in an autoclave prior to use on anyone else.
 9. To know that ear-piercing guns are never appropriate, and are often dangerous, when used on anything other than ear lobes.
 10. To be fitted only with jewellery which is appropriately sized, safe in material, design and construction, and which best promotes healing. Gold plated, gold filled and sterling silver jewellery are never appropriate for any new or unhealed piercing.
 11. To be informed about proper aftercare, and to have continuing access to their piercer for consultation and assistance with all their piercing-related questions.
- Produced by the Association of Professional Piercers (APP) www.safepiercing.org This is a great information resource.



What makes a piercing heal?

- 12.** Correct depth
- 13.** Correct placement
- 14.** Quality jewellery
- 15.** Flawless surface finish
- 16.** The right size jewellery
- 17.** The right style of jewellery for the piercing
- 18.** Correct aftercare
- 19.** Good health
- 20.** Good attitude
- 21.** Not touching it unless cleaning
- 22.** Being careful not to knock it around
- 23.** Not changing the jewellery for the first 3 months unless
 - a. It's an oral piercing
 - b. The initial jewellery is incorrect or of poor quality
- 24.** Your body primarily heals your piercing - not the aftercare. (Try to be healthy during this phase)

- 25.** The piercing room should look and smell clean
- 26.** You should feel comfortable with your piercer
- 27.** Your piercing experience should be able to be done in private
- 28.** Your piercing experience should not be rushed
- 29.** You should have the opportunity to discuss placement with your piercer
- 30.** Every piercing should be marked with a disposable marker



31. You have the right to see where the piercing is going before it is done
32. You have the right to choose your jewellery in accordance with what is appropriate
33. You have the right to change your mind about getting the piercing at any time before the piercing is done
34. You can ask to see the sterilization area
35. Every body piercer must use autoclave sterilization
36. The following do not effectively sterilize reusable piercing instruments or jewellery:
 - Boiling water
 - Pressure cookers
 - Electric frypans
 - Alcohol swabs
 - Saliva
 - UV Cabinets
 - Hibiclens
 - Anti-bacterial hand wash
 - Sunlight
37. Silver should never be used in fresh body piercings including the nose
38. Ear piercing guns should never be used to pierce anything



39. Body piercing requires specific training. Just because someone can:

- Tattoo
- Wax
- Cut hair
- Do nails
- Write a prescription
- Fill a prescription
- Give you a filling
- Perform plastic surgery
- Sell body jewellery
- Sell clothing
- Talk about piercing
- Do anything associated with the medical profession

...Doesn't mean they can pierce. All of these fields require specific education and training to perform successfully and body piercing is no different. It's like saying that just because someone can pierce, they can do all of these things.

40. A piercing will not heal faster if you double your aftercare

41. A piercing will not heal faster if you use lots of different products on it

42. If you notice your piercing becoming smaller in width, go and see your piercer

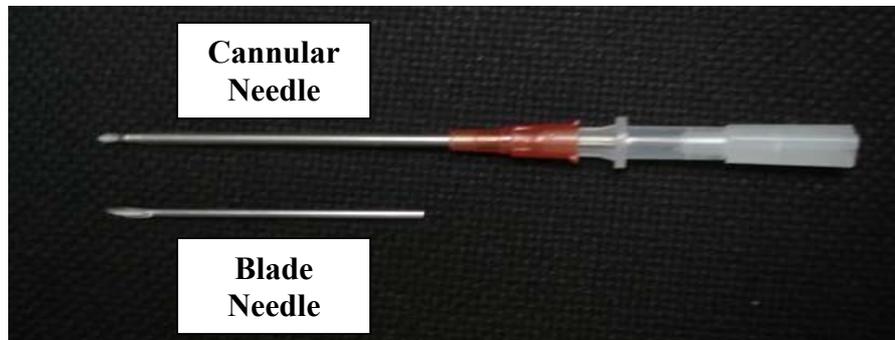
43. Price can be a factor which indicates experience and quality

44. Currently anyone can be a piercer. There isn't a formal qualification or legal requirement (in Australia)

45. Approval by the local health authority relates to the premises – not the piercer

46. Every piercing premises should be approved by the local health authority specifically for body piercing or skin penetration

47. That there are two types of piercing techniques – Blade and Cannular – which may indicate a piercer's level of experience



- 48. Blade piercers can do piercings at a range of different thicknesses. This can make certain piercings safer
- 49. Cannular piercings often hurt and bleed more
- 50. Piercings can be stretched from their initial size once well healed
- 51. That there are two types of barbell threading – internal and external – which can explain a price difference



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- 52. The ends on externally threaded jewellery don't usually lock as well as internally threaded jewellery and may fall off without warning
- 53. All threaded jewellery should be checked regularly to make sure the ends are secure



- 54.** If you lose a ball, a piece of blu-tack or pencil eraser will keep the jewellery secure until you can get to your piercer
- 55.** The following things that may be used on you for a piercing can all be sterilized in an autoclave:
- Initial piercing jewellery
 - Needles
 - Tapers
 - Clamps
 - Tubes
 - Pliers
 - Cotton buds/tips/Q-tips
 - Rubber bands
 - Toothpicks
 - Corks
- 56.** Gloves do not have magic powers – they should be changed at a minimum immediately prior to picking up the needle to perform your piercing.
- 57.** Don't touch a fresh piercing unless you are cleaning it
- 58.** Every piercing is a potential avenue for STD transmission. Prevent exposure to anyone's body fluids other than your own, on any fresh piercing
- 59.** Jewellery does not need to be removed in order to clean your piercing
- 60.** If you take your jewellery out there is a risk of the piercing closing extremely quickly
- 61.** Covering a fresh piercing to conceal it, can increase the healing time and the chance of an infection
- 62.** Your piercer should be clean and tidy



63. What's normal for a fresh healing piercing?

- tenderness
- a small circle of redness extending 2-3mm / 1/8" around the piercing site
- a clear to creamy coloured secretion that may dry at the entry/exit of the piercing
- that the piercing may close if the jewellery is removed at all
- for jewellery to be changed in oral piercings after the initial swelling has subsided – usually after 2-3 weeks
- for a piercing to cycle through good and not so good times for the first 12 months, salt water soaking will assist

64. What's not normal?

- A piercing that is not showing a continual improvement in the first 3 points above after approximately one month – see your piercer
- A piercing that is hot, swollen, red and secreting a yellow to green secretion – these are the signs of an infection – see your medical practitioner as soon as possible
- For any piercing to grow out – see your piercer
- For jewellery to repeatedly fall out – visit a good studio
- To continue use of chemical aftercare after the initial healing period

65. Even if you can't get your jewellery back in, your piercer has techniques that may allow the jewellery to be reinserted if you visit them quickly

66. Using any chemicals on a piercing after the initial healing period will delay the healing process



67. Salt water is the only product that should be used on an ongoing basis
68. If you are confident in your piercer/studio – only follow their advice regarding your piercing
69. If you are not confident in your piercer/studio it is okay to find a new one for advice (but please let the original piercer/studio know of your difficulties so that they may choose to seek further training. If you don't tell them, they probably won't even know they are doing something incorrectly)
70. If you have any concerns about your healing piercing, ask your piercer. (Well intentioned friends and family may have incorrect information)
71. Don't play with your jewellery
72. If your jewellery falls out, retaining the piercing with anything is better than nothing if you can't get the jewellery back in
73. Constantly moving jewellery is not necessary anymore as part of the healing process. (It came from when leather or string was used in initial piercings)
74. Body jewellery should never be stored unprotected with coins in a purse or wallet
75. All body jewellery should be completely smooth on the area that is inside you.
76. Never hand used jewellery to a piercer unless they are wearing gloves
77. Never place used jewellery on a shop counter if it's not in a bag
78. Always eat before getting a piercing done
79. Don't consume drugs within 24hrs of having a piercing done
80. Try to stay calm before your piercing
81. Most piercings should take less than one second to do



- 82.** Most piercings will hurt less than you think they will
- 83.** Try not to talk too much about your piercing with friends before doing it. Everyone always has a horror story that won't help you.
- 84.** Deep breaths will help while you are getting the piercing done. Try to exhale during the piercing itself.
- 85.** Watch your piercer to make sure they wash their hands
- 86.** Ask as many questions as you need to before making your piercing decision
- 87.** Vegetarians and Vegans may bleed more, so if this is your life choice eat more protein for a week or two before getting your piercing
- 88.** Don't get a piercing while you are sick
- 89.** Concerning any piercing – Trust Your Body – if it hurts don't do it - until further healing has taken place
- 90.** Proper tools make it easy to remove captive bead rings. Regular household tools will probably damage the jewellery.
- 91.** In most countries, it is illegal for piercers to supply the public with needles
- 92.** Blood borne diseases should not be a concern for good body piercers
- 93.** If you have a disease that compromises your immune system, check with your health care practitioner before getting a piercing done. They may suggest additional support for your system to prepare and aid the healing process.
- 94.** Please tell your piercer if you are a haemophiliac
- 95.** Some piercings may bleed immediately and others may start later. Apply a clean tissue to the piercing and apply pressure.



96. Most piercings don't bleed at all if they are performed with a blade needle
97. Asprin will thin the consistency of your blood. Don't take Asprin for pain relief of a fresh piercing. There are other options if needed.
98. Some piercings may bruise. If you are concerned see your piercer
99. Never move jewellery through your piercing when it is dry, or has dry matter on it
100. A good body piercing with good jewellery done by an experienced piercer should heal well and look fantastic!
101. Body piercings are so much fun to have – So do your research and Enjoy

Bonus points (so much to say and 101 things just will not cover it)

102. Body jewellery is like many other things we purchase – there is branded and no-name. Branded is often guaranteed and made by people within the body piercing industry (not by people looking to capitalize on us) Ask where your jewellery comes from. It is going inside you!
103. Just because you have problems with certain metals in your ears, may not mean that you are “allergic” to something. If you have been tested by all means please tell you piercer. Often it is more as a result of a stud gun piercing, or very cheap grades of stainless and silver that should never be used in body piercing jewellery (but unfortunately sometimes are). Like everything else – you should get what you pay for. A good test regarding Nickel for example can be the rivets on jeans. If these cause a reaction in you please tell your piercer that you are sensitive to Nickel.