



# KATDEMON ink<sup>©</sup>

## PIERCING AFTERCARE

### What is Normal?

- Initially, some bleeding, localized swelling, tenderness or bruising.
- During healing: Some discoloration, itching, secretion of a whitish-yellow fluid (not pus) that will form crust on the jewellery. The tissue may tighten around the jewellery as it heals.
- Once healed: The jewellery may not move freely in the piercing.

### BE PATIENT

- A piercing may seem healed before healing is complete. This is because piercings heal from the outside in and although it feels healed the tissue remains fragile on the inside.
- Keep cleaning throughout the entire healing period.

### What To Do

- Wash your hands prior to touching the piercing; leave it alone except when cleaning. It is not necessary to rotate the jewellery while healing except possibly during cleaning.
- Make sure that your jewellery and skin is free from any discharge before you attempt to move the jewellery. Irritation can occur when crusty matter is accidentally forced into the piercing.
- Stay healthy! Eat a nutritious diet. The healthier your lifestyle, the easier it will be for your piercing to heal. Exercise during healing is fine, just “listen” to your body.
- Make sure your bedding is kept clean and changed regularly. Wear clean, comfortable, breathable clothing that protects your piercing while sleeping.
- Showering is safer than taking a bath, because bath tubs tend to harbour bacteria. If you would like to take a bath, clean the tub well before and after each use.

### Cleaning Solutions

Use either one or both of the following solutions for cleaning body piercings:

- Packaged sterile saline solution with no additives (read the label!) or non-iodized sea salt mixture: Dissolve 1/8 - 1/4 teaspoon of non-iodized (iodine-free) sea salt into one cup (8oz) of warm distilled or bottled water. A stronger mixture is not better and could cause burns.
- Liquid anti-microbial or germicidal soap.

### Cleaning Instructions for Body Piercings

#### 1. WASH

your hands thoroughly prior to cleaning, or touching on or near your piercing.

#### 2. SALINE

soak at least two to three times daily. Simply invert a cup of warm saline solution over the area to form a vacuum for a few minutes. The longer you soak, the better. For certain placements, it may be easier to apply using fresh gauze or a cotton ball saturated in saline solution. A brief rinse will remove any residue.

#### 3. SOAP

no more than once or twice a day. Whilst showering, lather up a pearl size drop of the soap to clean the jewellery and the piercing. Leave the cleanser on the piercing no more than thirty seconds, then rinse thoroughly to remove all traces of the soap.

#### 4. DRY

with disposable paper products such as gauze or tissues, because towels can harbour bacteria and catch on new piercings causing injury. Pat gently to avoid trauma.

## What To Avoid

- Avoid undue trauma such as friction from clothing, excessive motion of the area, playing with the jewellery and vigorous cleaning. These activities can cause the formation of unsightly and uncomfortable scar tissue, migration, prolonged healing and other complications.
- Avoid the use of alcohol, hydrogen peroxide, Betadine, Hibiclens or ointment.
- Avoid over cleaning. This can delay your healing and irritate your piercing.
- Avoid all oral contact, rough play, and contact with others' bodily fluids on or near your piercing during healing.
- Avoid stress and recreational drug use including excessive caffeine, nicotine and alcohol.
- Avoid submerging the piercing in bodies of water such as lakes, pools, jacuzzi, etc. Or protect your piercing using a special water-proof bandage such as Tegaderm, which is available at Chemists.
- Avoid all beauty and personal care products on or around the piercing including cosmetics, lotions, sprays, etc.
- Don't hang charms or any other object from your jewellery until the piercing is fully healed.

## Hints and Tips for Jewellery

- Unless there is a problem with the size, style, or material of the initial jewellery, leave it in place for the entire healing period. A qualified piercer should perform any necessary jewellery change that occurs during healing.
- Contact your piercer if your jewellery must be temporarily removed (such as for a medical procedure). There are non-metallic jewellery alternatives.
- Leave jewellery in at all times. Even old, well healed piercings can shrink and close in minutes after having been there for years! If removed re-insertion can be difficult or impossible.
- With clean hands or paper product, be sure to regularly check the threaded ends on your jewellery for tightness. ("Righty-tighty, lefty-loosey")
- Carry a clean spare ball in case of loss or breakage.
- Should you decide you no longer want the piercing, seek professional help in the removal of the jewellery and continue cleaning the piercing until the hole closes. In most cases only a small indentation will remain.

## For Particular Areas

### Navel

- A hard, vented eye patch (sold at pharmacies) can be applied under tight clothing (such as nylon stockings) or secured using a length of ace bandage around the body (to avoid irritation from adhesive). This can protect the area from restrictive clothing, excess irritation, and impact during physical activities such as contact sports.

### Ear/Ear Cartilage and Facial

- Place a towel between piercing and pillow, care should be taken that it is clean and disposable where possible.
- Maintain cleanliness of telephones, headphones, eyeglasses, helmets, hats and anything that contacts the pierced area.
- Use caution when styling your hair and advise your stylist of a new or healing piercing.

### Nipple

- The support of a tight cotton shirt or sports bra may provide protection and feel comfortable, especially for sleeping. Loose fitting clothing may seem to provide more comfort but they will move and may cause further trauma.

### Nasal

- Nasal piercing studs should be reinserted if they become loose at anytime with clean hands.
- Use a cotton bud to clean the piercing inside the nose.

### Tongue/Lip (Labret) Cheek

- Swelling will normally occur within the first 72 hours. It is important to drink lots of cold liquids and gently suck on ice to help minimize the swelling. Use ice 30 minutes on, 30 minutes off to help keep maximum blood flow.
- Don't share plates, cups, or eating utensils with others. Replace your toothbrush and keep it clean during the healing period. Keep dirty fingers, pencils, sunglasses etc. out of your mouth.
- Avoid excessive talking, playing with the jewellery and all oral contact (including wet kissing) during the healing time.
- Check the threaded ends of the jewellery are on securely. Tighten them daily to ensure the jewellery stays in place.
- Those with tongue piercings should be cautioned that playing with the jewellery excessively is frequently the cause of reported tooth and gum damage and should be avoided.

### Genital

- In most cases you can engage in gentle sexual activity as soon as you feel ready. Comfort and Hygiene are vital.
- To increase comfort and decrease trauma, soak in warm saline solution or plain water to remove any crusty matter prior to sexual activity.
- Use barriers such as condoms, dental dams, and Tegaderm, etc. to avoid contact with a partner's bodily fluids, even in long-term relationships.
- Use clean, disposable barriers on sex toys.
- Use a new container of water based lubricant. Do not use your own saliva.
- After sex, an additional saline soak or clean water rinse is suggested.
- Prince Albert and Apadravya piercings can bleed freely for the first few days.
- If using soap, urinate after cleaning any piercing that is near the urethra.

*Each body is unique and healing times vary considerably. If you have any questions, please contact your piercer.*