

Ear Cartilage

Piercing Aftercare Guide.

Healing

It is recommended that you don't change, twist or fiddle with the jewellery for 12 months.

Twisting and fiddling with the jewellery within the piercing breaks the healing tissue trying to form around the bar and grinds dirt and other unpleasant things into the wound causing infection, irritation and prolonging the healing time.

It used to be thought that the skin forming around the bar would cause the jewellery to stick to the inside of the wound but we now know that this is how your [body forms](#) a fistula (a tunnel of tissue) and that breaking the new tissue damages this process so it's best to leave things alone!

The jewellery you have been pierced with should also be made from a good quality metal or hypoallergenic medical plastic (like PTFE) and changing to something else may cause irritation and reactions that can be detrimental to your healing.

Cleaning

Mix ¼ teaspoon of sea salt into 1 coffee [mug](#) of boiling water and leave to cool until bearable. It is important to stick to this measurement and to use sea salt as other salts have chemicals added to them to stop them clumping which will irritate your piercing. Also, where possible, boil your water in a microwave to avoid the bacteria that lurk in the bottom of your kettle.

Make sure your hands are clean and then take the cup and completely immerse your piercing in the water for 5-10mins – or until the water feels cool on your skin. Sometimes filling a shot or wine glass with the mixture and bringing it to your piercing is easier than leaning over the cup itself.

Next take a cotton bud and soak it in the solution. **Clean thoroughly around the front and back of the piercing**, removing any “crusties.” Crusties caused by a light yellow / white discharge are perfectly normal to see throughout your healing time.

When you have finished **rinse with clean warm water and dry the piercing thoroughly** on a [clean piece](#) of kitchen roll or paper towel as moist piercings attract bacteria! Avoid using cotton

wool or cheap toilet roll as they can leave behind fibres and don't use towels because they can harbour a lot of bacteria, dirt and dead skin.

Now is a good time to **ensure the balls on your jewellery are on nice and tight** while the piercing is crust-free and your hands are clean! Remember: Lefty Loosy, Righty Tightly.

It is best to clean your piercing twice a day for the first two weeks. After this simply soak whenever the piercing feels sore or has crusties. Don't clean more than twice a day as over cleaning won't help your piercing heal any faster – in fact it's likely to do the opposite!

It is important not to use any kind of alcohol or peroxide agents on the piercing (including hydrogen peroxide and rubbing alcohol) as these harm the fistula and weaken the tissue around the piercing making it more likely to reject. **Also avoid antibacterial, antimicrobial and antiseptic agents** (like TCP, Bactine, Dial, Savlon and solutions containing Benzalkonium Chloride) as they remove all the natural bacteria your body needs to heal with, repeatedly making your body restart the healing process. As well as this **it is strongly advised not to use any kind of cream on the piercing** as creams are petroleum based and cannot be absorbed by the body – meaning that it will form a seal and linger inside the piercing, trapping dirt and encouraging bacteria.