



Body Piercing – Infection Prevention and Control Practices

Before Starting a Piercing

- Record the client's name, address, telephone number, date and type of procedure, and the name of the person giving the piercing.
- Keep client records and accidental exposures for at least three years with a minimum of one year (365 days) on site.
- Provide the client with information about the procedure and any associated risks.
- Clean and disinfect headrests, worktables and chairs between clients using a low-level disinfectant.
- Inspect the area of the skin that will be pierced for redness, swelling or a rash. Avoid piercing within 6 inches of skin that is red, swollen, infected or with a rash.
- Clean your hands before putting on single-use disposable gloves and after removing gloves.
- Put on a new pair of single-use disposable gloves for each client.
- Dispense any creams, lotions and ointments in a manner that prevents contamination by using a pump or disposable stick.
- Before marking the skin, clean the area with an approved antiseptic such as 70% isopropyl alcohol. If the skin is visibly soiled, clean the skin with soap and water before the applying antiseptic.
- Use a disposable swab. Once you have marked the skin, wait one minute for the ink to dry, and then cleanse the site again just before piercing. Use an approved skin antiseptic.

Piercing Equipment

- Look at the internal chemical indicators on every package to see they have changed colour. If there are external chemical indicators look at them too.
 - If you are not sure what colour the indicators should be after the instruments have gone through the sterilizer, refer to the information provided with the indicators or contact the manufacturer or supplier.
 - For more information on indicators see the [Sterilization – Infection Prevention & Control Fact Sheet](#).
- Needles and dermal punch (biopsy) tools must be removed from their packaging in view of the client and discarded into an approved sharps container. Sharps containers cannot be discarded with regular garbage.
- Jewellery must be pre-packaged and sterile. If it is not purchased pre-packaged and sterile, the jewellery must be cleaned and then sterilized before being used.

- Forceps, pliers, scissors and needle pushers must be cleaned and sterilized between clients.
- Instruments that cannot be cleaned immediately after use must be soaked in water, or water and detergent, in a container labelled “dirty instruments”.

What To Do If the Chemical Indicator Has Not Changed Colour

- Reprocess those same items immediately using an internal chemical indicator. An external indicator is also required if the internal indicator cannot be viewed inside a sealed package.
- If the indicator fails again, stop using any equipment from the failed indicator tests and conduct a spore test right away.
- Use equipment reprocessed from the last passed spore test or use purchased, pre-packaged, sterile items until you get the spore test results.

What to Do if the Sterilizer Fails a Spore Test

- Do not use any equipment from the failed load and any items sterilized after the last passed spore test. Best to open these packages so they are not accidentally used.
- Immediately place a notice on the sterilizer to let staff know not to use it.
- You can use any equipment sterilized during the time when the sterilizer passed the spore test or use purchased, pre-packaged, sterile items.
- Report the failed spore test to Toronto Public Health.

Aftercare Instructions

- Every client should be told and receive written information on how to care for their skin after the piercing and what they should do if their skin becomes red, swollen or uncomfortable.

Questions/inquiries? Please contact BodySafe at BodySafe@toronto.ca or 416-338-BODY(2639).