



# Piercing Aftercare

*By Kendra*

## Cleaning Solutions:

### Sterile Saline Solution

- You can get sterile saline solution from most pharmacies. Make sure to read the label and be sure it has no additives or chemicals (if you can't pronounce an ingredient, don't use it!)

### Sea Salt Mixture

- Fine grain, non-iodized sea salt can be found at health food and grocery stores.
- Mix 1/4 teaspoon of sea salt into a clean 8oz cup of warm distilled or bottled water.
- Replace every use.

### Non-Alcoholic Mouthwash

- 100% alcohol free mouthwash is easy to find at any drugstore.
- For oral piercings only.

## Cleaning Instructions:

**WASH** your hands thoroughly prior to touching your piercing for any reason.

**SOAK** your piercing for 5-10 minutes twice per day with desired method. If possible, invert a small cup of warm solution over the area. For hard to reach spots, saturate a clean piece of gauze or cotton ball and hold to your new piercing. Gently dissolve and wipe away any crusties.

**RINSE** to remove any residue from the piercing.

**DRY** by lightly patting with a disposable paper product. Towels can harbor bacteria and get caught. Ouch!

**LEAVE** it alone! No touchy, no rotating, no pushing back and forth.

## What to Expect:

- Bleeding, localized swelling, tenderness, discoloration, clear or yellow crusties.
- A piercing might seem healed before it actually is. This is because it heals from the inside out. Be cautious, patient, and keep cleaning for the full duration of your healing period.
- Infection is very rare. Most likely if you feel like your piercing is troublesome, it's irritation.

## What to Avoid:

- NO bactine, pierced ear solutions, Benzalkonium Chloride, rubbing alcohol, or peroxide. They sting and can seriously damage tissue.

- Stress, drug use, nicotine, caffeine, alcohol, overcleaning.
- Contaminating with hair products, perfume, or makeup.
- Submerging in unhygienic bodies of water (ie. pools, lakes, hot tubs, ocean, baths). If you do, a waterproof wound sealant bandage should be placed overtop and cleaned after finished.
- Trauma from friction of clothing and excessive motion.
- Removing your jewelry. Even healed piercings can shrink or close in minutes! Should you decide you no longer want your piercing, remove your jewelry and continue cleaning until the hole closes to prevent bacteria from being contained inside your body. In the event that an infection is suspected, quality jewelry should be left in place until resolved. Removal of the jewelry can seal the infection inside and result in an abscess.
- Touching it! Don't do it!