**Body Piercing After-Care**

The following items are guidance provided by the State of Texas:

BODY PIERCING after-care instructions:

I. Properly cleanse the pierced area by using mild, unscented soap for the external skin and or an antiseptic or salt water mouthwash for the oral cavity;

II. For at least the first six weeks, minimize exposure to filth.

III. Use sterile bandage(s) or other sterile dressing(s) when necessary.

IV. The client shall consult a health care practitioner at the first sign of infection or an allergic reaction, and report any diagnosed infection, allergic reaction, or adverse reaction resulting from the body piercing to Old Souls Ink and to the Texas Department of State Health Services, Tattoo and Body Piercing Program, at (512) 834-6711.

The following information is recommendations from your Body Piercer and Old Souls Ink:

Remember the number 1 rule: DON'T TOUCH IT! A piercing is a commitment! Until it is fully healed it is an open wound. Touching it with what can easily be unclean hands, playing with your jewelry, or otherwise traumatizing it can easily lead to infection, hypertrophic scarring or "piercing bumps", discomfort, and prolonged healing times. Healing times vary from person to person but generally last 3 to 6 months. Your piercing does strengthen daily but it must be cared for to fully heal and become durable. When it’s time to downsize or change your jewelry, be sure to schedule a follow up with your piercer. Should you run into trouble, please schedule a follow up or contact your piercer for direction, before attempting anything not outlined below.

TIPS- Remember to always keep your piercing dry! After you shower, you can use a hair dryer on cool or low to dry out any excess fluid from your piercing. Do not under any circumstance take your jewelry out, even if you think you may have an infection. Your piercing will quickly close and could trap the possible infection inside rather than allowing it to dry out.

HEALING

Week 1 - Inflammatory. Swelling, redness and clear fluid are normal. ICE!   
Week 2-4 - Healing. Yellow 'crusties' form, don't pick them! They have a purpose in your healing and will keep your piercing safe from dirt, debris, and other germs. Allow the 'crusties' to resolve themselves organically.   
Week 3 -4 Downsizing! Schedule a follow up appointment, so that we can update your jewelry to something more fitted, as you no longer need room for swelling, and the extra length may become hazardous!  
Week 5 - Maturation. Redness should be mostly gone. Still clean the piercing daily.

ORAL PIERCING  
- Use alcohol-free mouth rinse 2x a day (maximum!!).   
- Follow FACIAL aftercare for lip piercings.  
- Utilize ice and cold drinks during healing.  
- Swelling is normal for 2 weeks.  
- Eat soft foods during initial healing.   
- Rinse with cold water after every meal.  
- Do NOT play with jewelry at all.  
- Downsize jewelry in 4-6 weeks.  
- Healing can take up to 3 months.

FACIAL, EAR, & TORSO  
- Spray 2x a day with Saline wound wash.  
- Be sure to rinse off excess saline in shower.  
- **DO NOT** turn/twist jewelry, do not touch it, do not pick of the protective "crusties" your body forms.

TROUBLES

- Gold and sterling silver can be problematic during the first 6 months.  
- Sleeping on or bumping your piercing will slow healing and cause irritation bumps. Be gentle and consider a neck pillow, if you are a rough sleeper!  
-Hot chamomile tea bag compress soaks reduce bumps and increases blood flow.  
- Oral piercings that are constantly played with will rip and cause white bumpy scar tissue. Saline rinses, Aspro Clear and honey can help to reduce bumps.  
- Using alcohol wipes, Dettol, betadine, Listerine or any harsh products will harm your piercing. Stick to gentle aftercare and DONT TOUCH IT! PATIENCE IS KEY WITH BODY PIERCINGS!

Children-Parents should be checking their children's piercings until they are fully healed. Redness, swelling, or any problems should be discussed with your piercer, so that you may get DIRECTION BEFORE YOU ACT! Don't panic or worry! Kids are generally more rough, less aware of dirty hands, and forget not to touch at times. It happens! Problems are easily addressed and fixed.