**SKIN CITY INK & STEEL BODY PIERCING AFTERCARE INSTRUCTIONS**

**Congratulations!**

You've just received a body piercing by a skilled and knowledgeable professional who cleaned and disinfected the area pierced, used sterile instruments, jewelry and a single use needle.

**NOW IT IS UP TO YOU TO TAKE PROPER CARE OF YOUR PIERCING DURING THE CRUCIAL HEALING PERIOD. HOW YOUR PIERCING HEALS IS UP TO YOU AND YOUR BODY.**

**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 jewelry. The tissue may tighten around the jewelry as it heals.
* Once healed: The jewelry may not move freely in the piercing; **DO NOT** force it. If you fail to include cleaning your piercing as part of your daily hygiene routine, normal but smelly bodily secretions may accumulate.
* 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. **BE PATIENT** and 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 jewelry while healing except possibly during cleaning.
* Make sure that your jewelry and skin is free from any discharge before you attempt to move the jewelry. 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 bathtubs tend to harbor bacteria.

**Cleaning Solutions**

Use the following solution for cleaning body piercings:

* Saline Wash

**Cleaning Instructions for Body Piercings**

1. **WASH** your hands thoroughly prior to cleaning or touching your piercing or touching near your piercing.
2. **Clean** once in the morning and once at night. When showering, clean your piercing last, as your shampoo and body soaps will irritate your fresh piercings.
3. **If Needed DRY** with disposable paper products such as gauze or tissues, because cloth towels can harbor bacteria and catch on new piercings causing injury. Pat gently to avoid trauma.

**Cleaning Instructions for oral piercings**

 1. Get yourself a travel size bottle of Listerine.

 2. Fill the cap with half water and half Listerine, about half a cap full. Rinse your mouth out 4-5 times a day, no more than 6. If you are a smoker rinse after every few cigarettes and after every meal.

 3. Stay away from all yeast for 72 hours. (Milk, beer, breaded items)

 4. With tongue piercings, try and avoid foods like noodles as they can become wrapped around your bar and cause problems for you.

 5. Move your tongue as much as possible as it is a muscle. The more you move it the less it will swell and hurt.

**What to Avoid**

* Avoid undue trauma such as friction from clothing, excessive motion of the area, playing with the jewelry 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 rubbing alcohol, hydrogen peroxide, Betadine, Hibiclens or ointment.
* Avoid over cleaning. This can delay your healing and irritate your piercing.
* Avoid 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, Jacuzzis, etc.
* 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 jewelry until the piercing is fully healed.

**Complications and what to look for!**

How do I know if I have an infection or a reaction?

* Redness lasting more than a few days along with excess swelling
* warm to the touch (warmer than body temperature)
* yellow to green puss

**Treatment for Infection (saline soak)**

* 1 tsp ***IODINE FREE/NON-IODIZED SEA SALT***
* 8oz water
* Boil for 10 minutes or heat in microwave for 1 minute
* Let stand until it’s still warm but comfortable to the touch
* Soak piercing sight for 10-15 minutes 2 times a day
* Rinse briefly after
* Air dry
* Repeat until redness/ swelling/ and other indications of infection have passed
* Continue your aftercare instructions