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**AFTERCARE INSTRUCTIONS**

*Keep this safe until your piercing is completely healed!*

LOBE

**Earrings must be kept in for an 8 week minimum while cleaning twice a day**. An ear lobe piercing usually heals in the first 8 weeks after the piercing, but it can take up to 3 months to completely heal, *so don’t stop caring for it when it appears to be healed.* Ear lobes have good blood flow for healing, and are less prone to complications. See cleaning process below.

CARTILAGE

**Earrings must be kept in for a 3 month minimum while cleaning twice a day.** A piercing through this connective tissue takes 3-6 months, minimum to fully heal and some can take up to a year, so don’t stop caring for it when it appears to be healed.

We like to think of cartilage healing in timelines of three.

**First three days**, it is very normal for the piercing site to be extremely tender and somewhat painful. Wearing hair up and away is a good idea.

**First three weeks** are critical in the cartilage healing process. The piercing will still be tender if anything touches, or bumps the area, and adhering to these proper aftercare protocols is critical. If you “baby” your piercing the first three weeks, it will set the tone for how the cartilage will heal.

1. Do Not sleep on the piercing. Sleeping on a new piercing causes trauma, or worse, migration of the piercing. We recommend using a soft donut pillow. You can also use a travel pillow and place your ear in the neck hole, or roll up a scarf, but those options may be less comfortable.
2. Do Not skip a cleaning
3. Dry after each cleaning. make sure the back of the ear is dry around the piercing site.

**Three months** is the minimum timeline to continue with cleanings and wait time before switching jewelry.

CLEANING PROCESS

* Always **wash your hands** with soap and water prior to touching pierced ears.
* **Twice daily (1 x morning, 1 x night) flush** the area around the front and back of the piercing with saline dropper. You may drop some saline on a Q-Tip as well for gentle cleaning around the piercing site. After you run out of provided starter saline, you can pick some up at Amazon or your local pharmacy for a low price. Look for 0.9% sterile saline without any other additives.
* You may do one of your cleanings in the shower or while washing your face. Suds up some non-irritating/no-fragrance soap and light wash around the piercing. Use water to wash off, avoiding direct water pressure.
* After cleansing, with saline or the shower, **DRY** with a clean q tip, a folded paper towel, or use a blow dryer on low-cool. Moisture=Bacteria!
* **Avoid twisting** and turning the jewelry
* **Avoid solutions and medications** not mentioned (ie: rubbing alcohol, neosporin) . It is no longer the standard of practice!
* **Pool/Ocean/Hot Tub/Bath**: soaking the ear in unsanitary water can cause irritation and infection! Avoid going in any pool water for AT LEAST 72 hours after piercing. Bring saline and q tips to clean and dry immediately after until healing is complete. Avoid ocean water for 2-3 weeks.
  + You can cover the piercing with a clear band aid (ie: *Tegaderm*) while swimming to limit the effects of soaking in unsanitary conditions

COMPLICATIONS

* **My piercing looks irritated! What should I do?** 
  + **Saline soaks** are a great way to give your piercing a more thorough, anti-inflammatory cleaning. It can rid irritation and even minor infections. Saturate a gauze pad or fresh paper towel with saline and hold for 3-5 minutes up to the ear.
  + Do saline soaks in place of the saline rinse two times a day for one week.
  + Avoid sleeping on the piercing for two weeks. We recommend a donut pillow.
  + *Pro tip:* normal saline is a great, non irritating way to cleanse wounds and sensitive areas on the skin including the eyes and mouth. Keep this liquid gold handy!
* **My piercing has a bubble! What should I do?**  A bubble formation at the jewelry access site at 1-2 months indicating excess irritation from trauma, movement of jewelry, or friction from jewelry and a stall in the healing process. Unlike infections or keloid formation, these bumps are usually soft with clear or bloody drainage with reddish appearance and slight tenderness.
  + **Saline soaks** are a great way to give your piercing a more thorough, anti-inflammatory cleaning. It can rid irritation and even minor infections. Saturate a gauze pad or fresh paper towel with saline and hold for 3-5 minutes up to the ear.
  + Do saline soaks in place of the saline rinse two times a day for one week.
  + Avoid sleeping on the piercing for two weeks. We recommend a donut pillow.
  + **Jewelry exchange**: if the bump is caused by friction of the jewelry itself, we can help you exchange for a more suitable earring based on your anatomy.
* **My earring fell out! What should I do?** Please understand, while we source our jewelry from the most qualified manufacturers in the industry and test all the jewelry for security, it is always a possibility for jewelry to come open.. To avoid this from happening, check your earrings once a week for security. For checking threaded flat back styles, Remember, RIGHTY, TIGHTY, LEFTY, LOOSEY, but it's opposite that principle when you are doing it yourself on your body vs. looking at the earring!
  + *post back:* If the earring is still in the ear but the backing fell off, clean any backing you might have in rubbing alcohol or antibacterial soap and temporarily place it on the earring to avoid it falling out. Then give us a call for a replacement back at a discounted price!
  + *flat back:* replace with a cleaned earring of your own and call us for a replacement top or post at a discounted price.
  + *my earring is missing:* replace with a cleaned earring of your own and call us for a replacement at a discounted price.

***Normal signs of healing***: slight crusting, slight swelling and redness, tenderness, pain after trauma to the piercing, pain when lying on your pierced ear.

***Abnormal signs to look out for***: marks on the skin indicating the fit is too snug, excessive bleeding, redness, swelling that fills the entire earring post, hard lumps of scar tissue, foul odor, and white/yellow/ green discharge.

If you have any aftercare questions or concerns, text or email us with pictures so we can assess and offer advice! For in person follow-up, we charge a $35 consultation fee.