**NIPPLE:**
- The support of a tight cotton shirt or sports bra may provide protection and feel comfortable, especially for sleeping.

**GENITAL:**
- Genital Piercings—especially Triangles, Prince Alberts, Ampallangs, and Apadravyas—can bleed freely for the first few days. Be prepared.
  - Additional cleaning after urination is not necessary.
  - Wash your hands before touching on (or near) a healing piercing.
  - In most cases you can engage in sexual activity as soon as you feel ready, but maintaining hygiene and avoiding trauma are vital; all sexual activities should be gentle during the healing period.
  - Use barriers such as condoms, dental dams, and waterproof bandages, etc. to avoid contact with your partners' body fluids, even in long-term monogamous relationships.
  - Use clean, disposable barriers on sex toys.
  - Use a new container of water-based lubricant; do not use saliva.
  - After sex, an additional saline soak or clean water rinse is suggested.

**SURFACE ANCHORS:**
- These piercings require maintenance during their entire lifetime because matter can build up underneath the threaded top causing the piercing to become irritated.
  - Saline and/or shower rinses may be helpful with removing matter from underneath the threaded top.
  - Avoid putting makeup on these piercings even after healing.
  - Even with proper care, surface anchors may be less permanent than other body piercings.

Your __________________________ piercing is expected to take __________________________ or longer to heal.

**Piercer:** __________________________  
**Jewelry:** __________________________  
**Earliest Change/Downsize Date:** __________________________

For any additional information contact your piercer.

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**Disclaimer:** These guidelines are based on a combination of vast professional experience, common sense, research, and extensive clinical practice. This is not to be considered a substitute for medical advice from a doctor. If you suspect an infection, seek medical attention. Be aware that many doctors have not received specific training regarding piercing. Your local piercer may be able to refer you to a piercing-friendly medical professional. For more information, see the APP Brochure Troubleshooting For You and Your Healthcare Professional.

Use of this brochure does not imply membership in the APP. A current list of APP members can be found at safepiercing.org. False claims of membership should be reported to the APP.

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**SUGGESTED AFTERCARE GUIDELINES FOR BODY PIERCINGS**

2016 Edition
**TO STAY HEALTHY**

- The healthier your lifestyle, the easier it will be for your piercing to heal.
- Get enough sleep.
- To help healing and bolster your ability to fight infection eat a nutritious diet.¹ If you don’t, consider taking nutritional supplements daily.

**WHAT TO AVOID**

- Avoid cleaning with alcohol, hydrogen peroxide, Dial® or other soaps containing triclosan,² iodine, or any harsh products, as these can damage cells. Also avoid ointments as they prevent necessary air circulation.
- Avoid Bactine®, pierced ear care solutions, and other products containing Benzalkonium Chloride (BZK). These can be irritating and are not intended for long-term wound care.
- Avoid over-cleaning. This can delay your healing and irritate your piercing.
- 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 all 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 unhygienic bodies of water such as lakes, pools, hot tubs, etc. Or, protect your piercing using a waterproof wound-sealant bandage (such as 3M™ Nексар™ Clean Seals or Tegaderm). These are available at most drugstores.
- Avoid all beauty and personal care products on or around the piercing including cosmetics, lotions, and sprays, etc.
- Don’t hang charms or any object from your jewelry until the piercing is fully healed.

**WHAT IS NORMAL?**

- Initially: some bleeding, localized swelling, tenderness, and/or bruising.
- During healing: some discoloration, itching, secretion of a whitish-yellow fluid (not pus) that will form some 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 might seem healed before the healing process is complete. This is because tissue heals from the outside in, and although it feels fine, the interior remains fragile. Be patient, and keep cleaning throughout the entire initial healing period.
- Even healed piercings that you have had for years can shrink or close in minutes! If you like your piercing, keep jewelry in—do not leave the hole empty.

**WHAT TO DO**

- Wash your hands prior to touching the piercing; leave it alone except when cleaning. During healing it is not necessary to rotate your jewelry.
- Exercise during healing is fine; listen to your body.
- Make sure your bedding is washed and changed regularly. Wear clean, comfortable, breathable clothing that protects your piercing while you are sleeping.
- Showers tend to be safer than taking baths, as bathtubs can harbor bacteria. If you bathe in a tub, clean it well before each use and rinse off your piercing when you get out.

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