

The POINT – official newsletter of the:

**APP**™  ...the cutting edge of piercing technology

• ASSOCIATION OF  
PROFESSIONAL  
PIERCERS™

519 Castro Street, Box 120  
San Francisco, CA 94114  
Volume 1, Issue 3 April 1995

Welcome, once again, to *The Point*. This is our third issue to date, and we are very pleased at the response we've had so far.

This issue is comprised of letters we've received from various APP members and the public at large, as well as contributions from far and wide, from both members and non-members alike. We continue to encourage subscribers to share their experience and knowledge with us and the rest of the piercing community- please take the time to contribute!

As 1995 rolls on, the issue of legislation, or, at the very least, some form of regulation for the piercing industry increasingly becomes an issue. All of us are familiar with the piercing-related "horror stories" that are becoming an almost daily occurrence. Untrained, uncaring "piercers" are flooding the market, utilizing sub-standard jewelry, inadequate sterilization techniques, inappropriate tools, and poor bedside manner, all simply for the purposes of turning a quick profit. All of this can only serve to give the body piercing industry as a whole a bad name. After all, it's probably just a matter of time before some senator's daughter gets an infected navel piercing, and someone begins campaigning to ban this "Deadly New Menace"!

So what can we do, as responsible individual piercers? I believe there are a number of things. Obviously, as we have no agency to do it for us, we must police ourselves as an industry. One of the best tools we have is information. Let your clients (and anyone else who will listen) know what proper procedure and jewelry for body piercing is, and **why**. Don't just blithely tell

someone that they need such and such a gauge, diameter, etc., take the time to tell them the reasons. Let them know what kind of sterilization procedures you use, and tell them the minimum they should expect from any responsible piercer or tattooist. Encourage them to ask questions, and let them know that if someone is evasive or ignorant, they should take their business elsewhere.

Another issue is that of confrontation. When you hear of someone doing navel piercings with an ear-gun, for example, do you merely turn a blind eye, muttering to yourself about hacks, or do you call them on it? If you know of someone piercing dangerously or inappropriately in your area, do something about it! Often people like this are piercing out of the back of a clothing store or bar- if approaching the piercer does no good, talk to the owner of the establishment- many times people will hire in a "piercer" with no knowledge of what constitutes a professional, and will quickly get rid of them if they believe that lawsuits and/or permit troubles are imminent.

One key to this type of action is organization. While the APP was formed expressly for this purpose, you can help by getting to know the other professionals in your area. While many of us don't necessarily want to fraternize with the competition, try to at least keep the lines of communication open. If someone comes by your shop trying to sell flatware grade stainless jewelry as surgical grade, call the other local shops and tell them about it. If someone sets up at the local street fair piercing nipples with guns and

silver earrings, phone calls of complaint to the promoters from several area merchants will carry a lot more weight than those of just one lone proprietor.

Some of this may not make you any more popular with the people in question- so what? The fact of the matter is that most of them see body piercing as a quick cash opportunity-period. They couldn't care less about you, the industry, or their clients, so long as they can keep their costs low and profits high. Occasionally you will encounter someone who is lacking in professional procedure strictly out of ignorance. You may want to tell them politely but firmly what is and isn't acceptable, and point them in the direction of a good information source like the APP- sometimes these people learn from their mistakes and go on to become responsible piercers.

Please note that this is not intended as a condemnation of individual freelance piercers, or of very small shops. While it is certainly easier for a larger shop to maintain the standards necessary for safe and responsible piercing, I think we can all agree that we've seen individuals that were professional, competent, and consistently first rate, and shops that were the worst examples of hacks in every regard.

In closing, the piercing industry as a whole is experiencing growing pains. It is rapidly moving from a small, specialized trade into a complex, multi-million dollar industry. Along the way there are bound to be setbacks. Like any growing industry we will see the rise and fall of numerous fly-by-night companies, con-artists, and well-meaning but inept entrepreneurs who will flood the market with their goods and "services". One would do well to look at what has happened in the medical industry in the last couple of centuries as an example. Two hundred years ago the career of "surgeon" was only slightly above that of knacker or rat-catcher. Thanks to hard work and the establishment of standards on the part of members of the medical industry, however, they have carefully built a

reputation of reliability and trustworthiness. After all, it's rare nowadays that you need to worry about whether a doctor is going to use a rusty scalpel on you during an operation, or whether or not the hospital has bothered to wash the blood off the table between patients. If the responsible professionals that comprise the bulk of this industry can cooperate and work together towards establishing some universal standards and public awareness, we can weather the rough waters ahead, and hopefully grow stronger as a group from it. With all of your help, we can build a set of standards for this industry that will earn us a reputation for safety, reliability, and a level of professionalism that is worthy of respect.

—Richard White  
Primeval Body  
Los Angeles, CA



## RESOURCE LIST

One excellent suggestion that was made was the idea of a list of "piercing friendly" physicians that piercers could refer clients to in the event of a problem. Often doctors have little or no experience with treating body piercings, and are distinctly unsympathetic and/or hostile to the entire idea. To avoid situations like this, and other situations that frequently arise (for example: a client's reluctance to discuss problems with a genital piercing with their long-time family physician), we would like to start compiling a resource list of doctors for piercers around the country. One in Los Angeles that comes highly recommended is:

•**Keith Medical Group.** Dr. Erik Fleischman in particular. 6200 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 1510, Los Angeles, CA 90048 Tel. (213) 964-1440

If you can recommend any "piercing friendly" doctors in your area, let us know!

# LETTERS

Dear APP,

This letter is in response to an opinion voiced on page 5 of Volume 1, Jan 1995 Issue #2 of *The Point*. I resent the remark that "Professionals don't pierce out of head shops or hair salons-they work in full-service piercing studios". The point is well-taken, and I agree there are people out there who are not properly trained doing piercing on unsuspecting clients. I resent the slam against hair salons-I have worked in this industry for five years and as licensed cosmetologists and nail technicians we do go through school, state licensing and a large part of this requirement is placed on sterilization. This is our foundation of training. We have built years of trust with customers and they look to us as professionals for all types of modifications. I look at body piercing as a form of artful expression as well as my husband does for tattooing. We have a very strict practice of training for all employees and offer hair, nail, tattoo, and body piercing services.

We have went through license, inspections and many levels of acceptance as a salon. I feel we are offering these services to the public in a well kept, comfortable business that practices to the best as we can. We require all employees to continue training and learning at every show and convention in our reach.

This seems to be more requirements for salons than made on any local tattoo shops that pop open every day. There are no requirements in our state for tattoo or piercing shops but there is quite a lot for salons. I think we should give us in the beauty industry credit for our work. After all piercings and tattoos are beautiful too.

Example of salon requirements:

- \*mop floors with bleach
- \*tables and chairs cleaned with 70% alcohol

- \*implements soaking in germicide/ viruo cide/ hospital grade antiseptic
- \*brushes soaking in barbicide
- \*metal implements in contact of body fluids are autoclaved before re-use
- \*Use of dry sanitizers and wet sanitizers
- \*latex gloves used when needed

**Richard and Sandra Kipp**  
*Painless Elegance*  
*"A Full-Service Salon"*  
Davison, MI

*Editorial note-* I feel that I must respond to this letter. While I don't know Ms. Kipp and so cannot make any assumptions about her piercing standards or abilities, her letter raises a lot of related issues for me. These are only my personal opinions, not official APP policy.

While health and safety training in a field related to piercing is certainly far preferable to no health and safety training at all, I consider it to be inadequate. I am a very competent, professional, fully trained piercer. I don't feel that this fact entitles me in any way to pick up a tattoo gun, blow dryer, or scalpel and claim that my piercing ability automatically renders me fit to tattoo, style hair, or perform surgery. That just isn't true. Contrary to commonly held ideas, piercing is a highly skilled, specialized craft, usually requiring a lengthy apprenticeship to perfect. I have no problem with a tattoo artist, medical professional, or hair stylist who is ALSO a fully trained, responsible piercer, but if you feel that one skill entitles you to claim mastery of another skill, you are misled, and misleading your clientele.

Likewise, the environment appropriate for each of these fields is unique. A separate facility for each service is critical. A piercing is essentially a puncture wound. Hair, dander, tattoo inks, hairsprays, and other airborne particles

can easily make their way into a new piercing, causing no end of trouble. Furthermore, the risk of cross-contamination from one service to another is simply too great to take. Please- if you offer multiple services, offer them in separate, specially set-up rooms.

In many states, the Board of Barbering and Cosmetology is actively lobbying for control of the piercing and tattoo industries. Rest assured that if they are successful, only licensed cosmetologists will be piercing. Using what methods? The method universally taught in cosmetology schools is (shudder) the ubiquitous and hateful ear piercing gun. I cannot believe that concern for the well-being of piercees is the motivation for this aggressive legislation, and I highly doubt that higher-ups in the Beauty Industry will pay much heed to the advice or opinions of professional piercers.

The tattoo and medical industries also often claim piercing as their field of expertise. These proclamations concern me- I don't think anyone knows how better to perform safe, responsible piercings than safe, responsible piercers. Our near future will be full of ego battles with greedy people, and we owe it to our clients to maintain the highest standards of sterility, professionalism, and responsibility, in spite of the maelstroms swirling about the industry.

As specifically regards the cosmetology sanitation requirements- anyone who applied these same standards to piercing would quickly spread tuberculosis, hepatitis, and other hardy bloodborne pathogens among their clientele; minor cosmetic procedures rarely involve the creation of puncture wounds.

70% alcohol kills a minimum of airborne pathogens, and only the most fragile bloodborne pathogens. A 10% bleach solution or hard-surface disinfectant such as Madacide should always be used on all surfaces in a piercing studio. Soaking piercing implements in disinfectants, even if they haven't come into obvious contact with bloodborne pathogens, is a recipe for disaster. The ONLY way to prepare tools for

use on a client is an autoclave! A fresh pair of latex gloves should be worn for each individual part of the piercing process. For more information, refer to the sterilization/disinfection chart on page 10 of this issue of the Point.

—**Micheala Grey**  
*Gauntlet, Inc.*  
San Francisco, CA

#### *To The Point:*

I have spoken with a number of people and there seems to be some concern about the Board of Directors and their decision making power.

First off, I'd like to say that the decision making is up to all members of the A.P.P., not just the board. The Board of Directors is basically just a group of people to collect the views and opinions of the rest of the membership.

Secondly, the Board of Directors is a rotating group with each board member serving only a limited amount of time. This way, any member who may wish to be on the board can have the opportunity.

We encourage all who are interested in helping to keep piercing safe and legal to please contact myself, the APP directly, or any of the other board members for further information.

**Robert Petroff**  
*Insane Creations*  
Burton, MI



## **ANOTHER PLEA!**

We are still looking for help for the upcoming Issue #4. Anyone who would like to help with editing/assembly/proofreading is requested to contact us A.S.A.P. Knowledge of Quark Xpress is helpful, but not mandatory. Deadline for submissions for the next issue is July 1st. Keep 'em coming, and thanks again to everyone who has contributed so far!

## **SALINE SOLUTION**

Many people have found that the use of a sterile saline solution soak in conjunction with their twice daily cleaning is helpful in healing a new piercing. This has also been found effective for piercings that have become irritated or infected. Iodized table salt and/or natural sea salt can also be used in a similar manner. One suggested use for the saline is to soak the piercing in it for about 3 to 5 minutes prior to the regular cleaning. Iodized table salt or sea salt can be used the same way by dissolving about one full tablespoon of the salt into about 8 ounces of warm water. This type of soak will feel soothing to the piercing, and, more importantly, it will help to draw out whatever is irritating the piercing.

This process is effective because the body consists of approximately 70% saline solution. Therefore, it is a substance that the body is familiar with and will readily accept. Body cells regenerate by using saline that is normally found within the cell. When cells are damaged, in this case by piercing, the sodium within goes towards healing the cell. Cells are equipped with a process called nutrition. This is a property of the protoplasm within the cell, which is partially made up of sodium. Nutrition allows the protoplasm to draw towards itself the materials necessary for growth and regeneration. When an outside matter is introduced into the cell, in this case saline, it is incorporated into the cell through the cell membrane by a process called diffusion. In turn, any foreign matter or build up within the cell is excreted, as the saline takes its place.

Saline or salt water soaks have also been found effective in healing piercings that have suffered metal reactions. When a metal reaction occurs, the entrance points of the piercing usually swell and enlarge, as if trying to get away from the metal. Once a more suitable material is installed, regular cleaning, as well as frequent saline soaks, can usually help the piercing to

heal normally. Saline soaks have also helped in healing the more difficult to heal piercings, such as the hand web, or surface piercings, such as the neck or chest. It is suggested for these piercings, along with the regular cleaning routine, that the soaks can be done as many as five times a day.

—**Sharon Sheinker**  
*Gauntlet*  
Los Angeles, CA

## **PRODUCT ALERT**

One of the first and most important barriers between a piercer and the contraction and/or transmission of the various viral, bacterial, and infectious agents that come with the territory is a good pair of gloves. Yet the quality of gloves available can vary widely—and what's the point of wearing something that won't do the job? In an independent study carried out by the Medical Laboratory Observer recently, out of five brands of vinyl and latex gloves tested, one brand—the Safeskin Hypo-Allergenic latex glove— "...significantly and consistently outperformed all other brands." These gloves are powder free, to prevent irritant contact dermatitis reactions in piercer and piercee alike, and meet or exceed ASTM D-3578-91 standards. They are available in sizes X-Small thru X-Large, and come packaged 100 to a box, 10 boxes to a case. The article does not mention pricing, but says that "...price is comparable with that of others".

You can contact the Safeskin Corporation at (800) 462-9989, or Medco at (800) 770-3336 for further information and ordering.

—**Al D**  
*Playspace, Ltd.*

## **ERRATA**

In the last issue, the author of the article "Ethics in Piercing" was not given proper credit. The author was Gahdi at Mastodon Body & Book, San Diego, CA. We apologize for the oversight.

# STAINLESS STEEL

There are literally thousands of different metal alloys; and scores of corrosion resistant, or "Stainless" steels. Different stainless steels are used for such diverse applications as the turbine blades in jet engines, automobile exhaust systems, medical instruments, and table ware; and the different types are not interchangeable. A steel which will withstand the heat of a jet blast might corrode if used in a kitchen knife or lawn furniture. And while nearly any stainless steel would probably be suitable for jewelry worn externally, such as a bracelet or finger ring, when it comes to putting it inside your body in a new piercing you should be much more selective about which metal is used.

The environment inside the human body is actually quite harsh and will corrode most metals, but there are some which are resistant enough to be used for medical implants. As a result, when discussing metals in rec.arts.bodyart (Editor's note: this is the Internet newsgroup dedicated to body modification) people often refer to "surgical stainless steel". It turns out that there is really no such thing: at least, none of the industry references or selection guides I can find use that term. There is, however, one steel which is preferred due to its outstanding resistance to corrosion: it is commonly known as 316L. The steel selection guides I have consulted list 316 and 316L as the metals of choice for applications where corrosion resistance is important, and where it is important that whatever comes in contact with the metal, such as pharmaceuticals, are not contaminated. This makes it a good choice for body jewelry.

Another alloy sometimes mentioned is 440C. This is very much less resistant to corrosion than 316. It's used for cutlery because it can be hardened, and could be a good choice for scalpels and needles. But these things are in contact with the body for only a very brief period of time, and often are discarded after one use. 440C will not even resist salt water, and probably

shouldn't be used in piercings.

[Optional technical stuff: when most metals are exposed to oxygen in air or water or body fluids, they will combine with it to form an oxide. On common steels this is iron oxide or rust, and it flakes off: so the metal underneath rusts, and the process keeps going. Stainless Steels contain chromium, and often other metals. When stainless steel is exposed to oxygen a thin tough layer of chromium oxide forms on the surface and adheres tightly, protecting the metal underneath from any further reaction. If the oxide is scratched off, a new layer forms almost instantly. The metal is protected from the environment, and no metal leaches out into whatever is in contact with it (like your body). 316 contains a high percentage of chromium, plus nickel, manganese and molybdenum, and forms a protective oxide better than most other alloys. 316L is the same except for less carbon, making it easier to weld. 440C has less chromium, no nickel, and less of other elements, and the oxide layer isn't as resistant to corrosive environments.]

4 316L has other useful properties. It's fairly strong, is reasonably easy to work with (bend, cut threads in, etc.), and won't lose its corrosion resistance if heated during normal bending, soldering or welding. It can be made into springs, so it can form jewelry which can be bent moderately for fitting and will return to its proper shape.

There is little that should have to be done to keep stainless steel jewelry looking good. Anything that gets on it (like "crusties") should wash off with soap or detergent. However, there is one thing you should **not** do: **do not use steel wool on stainless steel**. If you use steel wool or kitchen scouring pads, little bits of iron or steel (possibly too small to see) could become embedded in the stainless steel. They will rust, and the corrosion could spread under the protective oxide. This can be fixed by etching with nitric acid (which is dangerous), or by polishing off the surface with a safe abrasive. Obviously,

it's better to not use steel wool in the first place.

So how is one tell if you have the right kind of stainless steel? Unfortunately, they all look very much alike. Only a chemical test can really distinguish one from another. However: if the metal is strongly attracted to a magnet, it is definitely the wrong kind (such as 440). Unfortunately, just because it isn't attracted to a magnet doesn't mean it's the right kind. The best thing to do is to ask the person who makes or sells it exactly what it's made of: if they can't positively identify it as 316L or SAE 30316L or UNI S31603, buy your jewelry somewhere else. It shouldn't be made from welding rod either: the alloy used to weld 316L may not have the same composition as real 316L, plus it may be coated with a flux containing things you really don't want in your body.

The bottom line: you are probably getting a piercing to make yourself look better, or to make yourself feel better, or both. An infected piercing won't look or feel good, and you only have one body. You should be selective about what you put in it.

[More optional technical stuff: Because there are so many different metal alloys on the market, industry groups such as the SAE (Society of Automotive Engineers) have set up a numbering system to identify them. 316L is from the old SAE system. The newer SAE number is 30316L, and the even newer Unified Numbering System (UNI) number is S31603: but most people recognize the old 316L designation so I have used it here.]

—Bart Lederman  
via the Internet  
lederman@eisner.decus.org

## INTERNET UPDATE

Some news about the Internet, for those of you with computers and modems:

•The first issue of The Point is now available on the World Wide Web! For those of you unfamiliar with the web, it's a communications protocol/system that can accomodate graphics,

point-and-click linking to other sites, active forms, and much, much more. If none of that makes any sense to you, don't worry— it's easier to use than explain. Just find a friend who's hooked up to the World Wide Web (WWW) and give them this address:

<http://www.primenet.com/~primevl/appnews.html>

For those of you already on-line, check it out using your favorite Web browser (though I recommend Netscape). If you're not already a Point subscriber, there's an online form you can fill out to speed the processing of your subscription request. Coming soon: an A.P.P. homepage and FAQ at this same address. Stay tuned!

•Lani Teshima-Miller (teshima@uhunix.uhcc.hawaii.edu), the manager of the tattoo FAQ on the rec.arts.bodyart newsgroup, is assembling a directory called "The Purple Pages Directory". Rather than synopsize it myself, I'll quote from Lani's form:

*"... the r.a.b. Purple Pages Directory is an FAQ sheet that will be posted on a regular basis, which will include information about professional bodyart people such as yourself."*

*"The Purple Pages is a little bit like the White Pages, with your shop name, artist name(s), address, and phone number. But it's much more. It's also a "Yellow Pages," because it will also list additional information such as shop hours and specialization."*

*"How do you get listed in the Purple Pages? Easy! Just fill out the form below and email to me!"*

*"There is a catch, though (you KNEW there was one, wasn't there?). As you know, many usenet newsgroups (including ours) do not look kindly at straight advertising. This is one of the quandaries I was experiencing with the Tattoo FAQ Artist List. While I wanted to list tattoo artists who were communicating over the Internet, it also gave me a moral dilemma when as artist wanted their own*

shop review included--making it look like a self-promotion."

"So the catch is this. The *"ONLY"* businesses allowed to be included in the Purple Pages Directory are those who have Internet accounts, who *ALSO* promise to regularly check their e-mail accounts to answer queries. They may be from potential customers or just the curious. It means you have to be willing to be listed as a resource, to "give back" to our readers for being able to have your business listed for free on the FAQ. That doesn't mean you have to spend all your time online. And if they ask FAQ-type questions, you should be pointing them in the direction of the various r.a.b. FAQ sheets."

"It also means that if something happens and you lose your Internet access, that your entry will be removed from the directory."

Sounds good to me! To receive the form, or for more information, contact Lani at her e-mail address above.

—Richard White  
Primeval Body  
Los Angeles, CA



## **PIERCINGS AND SURGERY**

At times, when going in for a hospital stay, you are asked to remove your jewelry. Some people have expressed some skepticism that this is really necessary.

The problem begins when we talk a little bit about radio waves. RF (radio frequency) signals don't behave like conventional electricity, and can be radiated outward from an antenna into free space. If your body is energized with RF uniformly, it won't do you any harm until you take

hold of a metal object, which will radiate that signal outward and tend to give you a burn on the area where you touched it. Frequently technicians will work on an energized AM broadcast antenna (where the whole tower is the antenna). So long as they jump onto the tower without touching both the tower and the ground, they are perfectly safe, but they have to be very careful about keeping tools insulated and staying away from sharp points on the structure. Working around high voltage RF fields, one is advised to remove watches and wire-rimmed glasses, let alone labial piercings.

Now, you ask what this has to do with the hospital stay. Well, the primary problem that we come to is that whenever you have an electrical pulse that is very short and abrupt, with a fast risetime, high frequency radio signals will be generated. This is why running the vacuum cleaner interferes with the TV reception, for instance, because the abrupt opening and closing of the circuit by the motor brushes causes a large number of high frequency harmonics to be generated. Lightning is another excellent example of the phenomenon. (If you want a mathematical way of thinking about this, imagine trying to represent a discontinuous function as a Fourier series... it will require an infinite number of terms each of which represents higher and higher frequency products. If you don't know what this means, don't sweat it, though.)

The heart defibrillator is probably the best example of this, however. It uses a very high voltage pulse with a very short risetime to stimulate the heart muscles when the heart has gone into convulsions. While it has saved the lives of many people, the side effects from having short risetime pulses going through your body can be pretty severe, especially if you have hidden jewelry somewhere. What is worse is that the patient who is receiving this is probably not in any state to inform the doctor that there is something wrong.

Another problem here concerns electrocautery equipment, which uses a very localized

RF current to fuse tissues and blood vessels. While this equipment has resulted in much reduced surgery times and fewer bleeding problems, it can also result in stray RF travelling around in the patient's body. Usually a secure ground is attached to the body in the area where work is taking place, but if that ground develops a poor contact, RF leakage throughout the body can take place.

So, follow the instructions and remove the jewelry. It might not be a problem at all, but it might also save you from serious injury in an emergency, and it's not all that difficult to do. A little bit of nylon cord can save a lot of injury.

Short note: Diathermy equipment also has similar effects, though patients undergoing diathermy probably have a better grip on what is happening to them and the effect isn't so severe. Frankly, does anyone still use diathermy these days, anyway? I haven't heard about it for years....

—Scott Dorsey  
via the Internet

kludge@grissom.larc.nasa.gov



## WHAT IS A "PROFESSIONAL"?

There are many approaches to Professional body piercing, many reasons which define the core of why one engages in this art. Key terms such as "Professional," "Responsible," and "Cutting edge" are not universally understood, there is no definition accepted by all. Are you a "Professional" simply because you are able to persuade people to pay you for piercing them? Does "Responsible" mean no more than none of your piercees have ended up in the hospital as a result of your piercing them or failing to give sound aftercare suggestions (yet)? Is "Cutting

edge" defined by how much you have gotten away with, how far you've gone without crossing the invisible boundary beyond which medical disaster or legal calamity lurk?

There are two troublesome conditions among people calling themselves "professional" body piercers. One is known as "Diva syndrome". You have probably encountered the piercer who is so brilliant, so talented, so knowledgeable that they are open to neither learning better techniques nor sharing their secrets. The other is the freak show approach to body piercing. This is the "Look at me! look at me! look at me! - I've done the wildest, freakiest, most shocking piercings yet and am here to tell about it!" mode. Neither person approaches body piercing as an ancient art to be respected and carefully shared with people as special and personal adornment. When an outraged legislator makes piercing illegal in your area and puts the responsible piercers out of business, what will Mr/Ms Diva-Freak Show do? Continue to ply their trade in their back room as they did before going public and declaring themselves "Professional."

Many times in the past two decades, piercing has been at least tolerated by authorities due to its ancient history. Traditional piercings ranging from Ampallangs to Septums have well documented historical roots. Responsible professionals who spent many years perfecting the art made improvements with the goal of increased safety and comfort. New piercings were developed cautiously, with the excitement of discovery well balance by a commitment to safety. Safety not only for the pierced but also for the committed professional piercer who would like it to be a lifetime career.

It is sadly naive for anyone to rely on the openness of a politician on a crusade. It is a rare legislator who will be spurred to ban piercing because of someone's shocking misfortune, and then significantly change course due to the input of responsible, experienced professional piercers. Some piercers who are very young,

(continued on page 11)

# TABLE FOR DISINFECTION AND STERILIZATION

MICROORGANISMS:	METHOD:	PROCESS:	TYPE OF ITEM:
<p>All forms of microbial life are killed.                      All bacterial spores.                      All bacteria.                      All fungi.                      All viruses.</p>	<p>Sterilization</p>	<p>Saturated Steam:                      Autoclave 220-270 kP pressure, 140° C, 284° F for 15-40 minutes depending on cycle.                      Pressure cooker at maximum pressure for 45 minutes.                      Dry Heat (Dry-Clave) 177° C, 350° F. for 1 hour.                      Gas Plasma (ETO gas). Not practical for piercers.</p>	<p><b>CRITICAL (Dark Red):</b>                      Likely presence of bloodborne pathogens.                      Contact with normally sterile tissue or direct blood contact. Forceps, needles, used jewelry, contaminated trays, jewelry disinfectant dishes.</p>
<p>Some bacterial spores.                      All bacteria.                      Most non-lipid viruses.                      Fungal spores.</p>	<p>Hospital level disinfection.</p>	<p>Pasteurization.                      Chemical exposure for 10-20 minutes:                      Glutaraldehyde 2% solution* for 10 minutes;                      Synergistic compounds (Madacide) for 10 minutes;                      Sodium Hypochlorite (bleach) 10% solution for 10 minutes;                      Phenolics (Lysol) 10% solution for 20 minutes;                      Alcohol, 70% solution for 20+ minutes;                      Iodophores (iodine) for 20 minutes;                      Formalins (formaldehyde)* 20+ minutes.                      *classified as nonbiodegradable biohazard.</p>	<p><b>SEM-CRITICAL (Red):</b>                      Possible presence of bloodborne pathogens, direct or indirect contact with mucous membranes or broken skin.                      Calipers and other non-autoclavable items.</p>
<p>Vegetative bacteria.                      Lipid viruses.                      Some Fungal Spores.                      HIV.                      Gram positive bacteria.</p>	<p>Low-level disinfection.</p>	<p>Chemical exposure for 10 minutes or less:                      Quaternary ammonium compounds,                      Phenolics (Lysol),                      Alcohol (70%).</p>	<p><b>NON-CRITICAL (Pink):</b>                      Contact with unbroken skin only, no bloodborne pathogens. Surfaces, doorknobs, faucets, un-contaminated calipers, pens, etc</p>

(continued from page 9)

naive about political realities, or otherwise feel unthreatened display an amazing arrogance. It seems they "thumb their nose" at "authority" and dance along the edge relishing the rush of survived risk. They, along with the "Diva" and "Freak Show" piercers are a great threat to the responsible career professionals. If piercing is not to be driven underground by crusading politicians, a mature, balanced approach to what might be new and exciting in piercing must be maintained.

—Drew Ward  
Gauntlet, Inc.  
San Francisco, CA



## TELL A FRIEND

There are a great number of people throughout the United States that claim to be "Certified" Body Piercers. To those who may be unaware (whether you are a piercee or piercer), you need to know that this claim is deceptive and false. Since there is no official organization or agency to certify any group or individual there can be no certification. When anyone claims certification they are misleading the general public. That would be enough to raise the question in my mind of whether I would allow this person pierce me or not. If you know a piercer that says they are certified, inform them in a polite way that in the long run they would be better off not to claim this so-called certification- i.e., find another marketing ploy. One last note-if you tell one person that "certified" body piercing is a hoax, then perhaps they will tell a friend...and so on, and so on...

—Gahdi  
Mastodon Body & Book  
San Diego, CA

I'd like to get *The Point* for the next \_\_\_\_\_ years at the annual rate of \$20.00.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Country \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my check/money order in US funds for \$ \_\_\_\_\_.



• ASSOCIATION OF  
**PROFESSIONAL  
PIERCERS**

519 Castro Street, Box 120  
San Francisco, CA 94114