

THE POINT

The Official Newsletter of
The Association of Professional Piercers
Spring, 2004 • Issue 28

THE APP ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXPOSITION

May 2-6, 2004, The Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas

The Association of Professional Piercers proudly announces the 2004 Annual Conference and Exposition in Las Vegas, Nevada. The Riviera Hotel and Casino is once again our host hotel.

The Vendor Expo is the only one of its kind, with the largest gathering of body jewelry and piercing industry related suppliers anywhere. Manufacturers often utilize this event to present new products and services to the piercing community. In addition, many vendors offer their goods and services at a discount to conference attendees.

Thanks to our generous vendors last year's raffle prize donations were valued at nearly \$80,000 dollars!!!! That's reason enough to attend: to participate in the raffle!

If you have any questions regarding vending, email APP President, Bethra Szumski at president@safepiercing.org or call (404) 315-6925.

You do not need to be an APP member to attend the conference. Of the nearly 30 courses offered, only one is restricted to members only. Although all are welcome to attend classes, the Expo is not open to members of the general public. A business card from your establishment and proof of retail license will be necessary to enter.

On-Line Registration

You can register on-line at Las Vegas Registration's website at <http://www.lvrsi.com> using your MasterCard or Visa. If you prefer, download the form on the APP web site at: <http://www.safepiercing.org/conferences.html> and FAX it to

(702) 893-9227 to register. Also, you can visit the Riviera Hotel Website for room reservations.

Round Table Discussions

In order to make the APP conference an information-sharing venture allowing EVERYONE to contribute, we have scheduled round table discussions on the following proposed topics: Extreme Piercing, Jewelry Display, Building a Portfolio, In-House Training for OSHA Compliance, Anthropology, and Body Modification in the Mass Media. There is no charge to attend these workshops.

Banquet Dinner

This sit-down dinner allows attendees to interact in a formal yet relaxed setting. There will be entertainment, a few short speeches, the presentation of Awards and the drawing for the top twenty-five raffle prizes.

Room Reservations

The APP has set aside a block of rooms for attendees at a group rate. When making your reservation, request rates for The Association of Professional Piercers (not APP). If you plan to stay at the hotel the weekend before or after confer-



ence, book as soon as possible. Weekend rates are subject to availability.

Visit the Riviera Hotel Website for room reservations or call (800) 634-6753 or (702) 794-9412

Single or double per night rates:
Standard Room.....\$75.00
Petite Suite.....\$175.00
One-Bedroom Suite.....\$300.00
Two-Bedroom Deluxe Suite.\$400.00

An excellent way to show support for both the APP and your fellow attendees is to book with the host hotel. Our classroom spaces are provided based on room occupancy, thereby making the event possible and attendance price reasonable.

Time is short, so book your room NOW!

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

The APP has always done its best to support the international piercing community. However, limited resources of finances and manpower have made the APP very much an American organization. Fortunately organizations are currently forming worldwide in order to educate healthcare providers, government, piercers and the general public in different countries.



The very first meeting for the leadership of these Associations was held on November 3, 2003 in Amsterdam, Holland. The meeting lasted approximately six hours and was attended by representatives from nine countries other than the US.

The meeting began with introductions. Each Association discussed their criteria for membership, their educational offerings, if any, their current legal status, i.e. non-profit status, and their current membership size.

Board members were able to discuss the problems facing both fledgling and long standing associations for support and feedback. We found that all associations face similar obstacles: wide spread skepticism and limited resources and participation. In many instances three or four dedicated volunteers are doing the work to keep piercing legal for an entire country.

With Body Art regulations being proposed at the EC level (which will affect most of Europe) the timing for such a meeting could not have been better. All of the attendees had been in a position to provide outreach to either their local government, at the EC level, or both.

Updates were provided on EC hearings and the legal status of piercing in countries such as Italy where piercing was nearly outlawed. A death there was originally blamed on a piercing but was later attributed to a pre-existing illness. This had caused widespread panic and the near outlawing of piercing in the entire country.

In addition to legislative updates and information sharing, a discussion was held about the need for gathering statistics.

We look forward to working with these dedicated individuals for years to come. The following is a list of those in attendance, and contact information for the associations represented at the meeting, and all the associations that are currently active:

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- Vice President Jason King
- Secretary Crystal Sims
- Treasurer Paul King
- Outreach Coordinator. Megg Mass
- International Liaison. . . Alicia Cardenas
- Medical Coordinator. Elayne Angel

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Thanks to the following for their donations to the APP:

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DISPLAYS CAN MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

The way you display your jewelry is vital. It can be the difference between making a sale versus frustrating, or even worse, discouraging a customer. What are the subtle tricks of the trade that make jewelry stand out and make people want to see a piece up close, and hopefully purchase it? How can a small studio do what Tiffany does with their windows? It is not as difficult as you may think, and you can have a lot of fun doing it. Spending a great deal of money on props or display stands is not necessary if you take some time to look around at what you have on hand with which to work.

Let us start with a few basic rules:

1. The most obvious no-no is dirty jewelry with fingerprints all over it. This is not attractive and makes the jewelry look cheap. So, a good, soft cloth to wipe the jewelry off after showing it to someone is a must.

2. Next is the lights. If your jewelry is in a dark case people can't see it very well. So get some light in that case, preferably low wattage lights so the case won't get too hot. Lights can also draw attention to a case.

3. Cluttered cases are another problem. Yes, you want people to think you have a lot to choose from. But when it comes to displays, less can be more. Try not to cram every piece of your inventory into your showcase. Store back stock in a convenient location for easy access.

4. The final recommendation regards how the jewelry is shown to the customer. Have a small display pad to place the jewelry on to show the customer. This simple act shows respect for the merchandise and adds value to it.

As you can see, these are small things that can be done to enhance the value and are not expensive to implement.

Your display cases are prime selling space and should be set up as such. If floor space is an issue, consider wall cases. Attractive wall cases can be made from picture frames mounted to a simple box with hinges and a lock. Use Lexan or plastic where the glass goes to avoid possible injury from broken glass. Most hardware stores carry a plastic glass replacement and will cut it to size for you. With several picture frame cases mounted on the wall you not only have more room to display your jewelry but give waiting customers the ability to move around the store and contemplate their next purchase.

With all your new space how do you design attractive displays to highlight the jewelry? Having fun is the key. Think in terms of a concept for the case or cases. For example, let's say the concept is piercing. You could use many of the items that are common to your profession for props. Hemostats, ring opening and closing pliers, tapers, and receiving tubes can all be used as props. Try

different ways to use them such as a hemostat hanging from the top of the case by fishing line, clamped onto the jewelry. Of course you would want to protect the jewelry by putting some tape on the hemostat jaws. Other common items like foam and packing materials spray painted and glued together could hold nostril screws; just poke them into the material. Toilet paper rolls covered with wrapping paper make great props. You can cut them to different heights and make risers like you see in jewelry stores. Toys also make inexpensive props. For a change try spray painting them white. I think you will see that almost anything can be used for props that will highlight your special jewelry and make the cases more dynamic.

Lighting a show case can be a challenge but there are options that are not expensive. You can buy rope lights from Wal-Mart for \$6.00 that are 18 feet long and can be joined together for longer lengths. Be sure to use the white ones; the object is to light up the case. If you have a few picture frame wall cases you could drill holes in the sides of the case and go from one case to the next looping the rope light on the inside of each case. Where the lights go along between the cases just attach it to the wall. If you want a more subtle effect try hiding some of the light by using colored electrical tape or better yet, behind molding so you get a more diffused light. Inside larger cases you can also use rope light or the small low voltage lights you find in the hardware store. They are inexpensive and can be placed where you need them. Try to keep the lights from shining in your customer's eyes by using such things as covered toilet paper rolls to block out some of the light.

By taking a little time to analyze your studio and being creative you will not only make your space more interesting but increase sales as well. Large department stores have their own staff devoted to merchandising for just this purpose. Once you set up your own program keep it changing. Use the seasons if need be to help keep your displays updated and fresh. Prevent that customer who's been in your store five times from getting bored, and hopefully he'll buy more jewelry. You would be surprised how just moving things around will draw their attention to a piece of jewelry you've had for months that they never saw before.

—James Green

James Green is the owner of Clayton Limited Editions a manufacturer of gold body piercing jewelry. James has been in the jewelry business for 28 years. He is the former manufacturing manager of Gauntlet gold jewelry, and has been producing gold body jewelry for eight years. You can reach James at www.claytonlimited.com



APP piercing ambassadors to APHA Caitlin McDiarmid and David Vidra

APHA AND THE APP

The APP made sure that we were represented at this very important event once again. Held in San Francisco this time, The American Public Health Association's Annual Conference ran from November 16 -19, 2003. With over 50,000 members, the APHA's exhibit hall had anywhere from 4000-12000 people visiting the 620 booths on any given day (statistics from APHA literature).

Paul King, Treasurer of the APP, co-owner/operator of Cold Steel USA, and the APP's Administrative Assistant, Caitlin McDiarmid attended all four days of the Conference/Exposition. This was their first year to attend APHA, although the APP has had a booth at APHA each year for the past seven years or so.

APHA's Conference is a place for the APP to put a professional "face" on our industry. More often than not, the first words from a person approaching the booth were, "I had NO IDEA there was such an organization as this!" Paul and Caitlin fielded questions ranging from, "How can I tell if my navel piercing is healed?" all the way to, "What do you feel the disease transmission risk is from your industry?"—and everything in between. For every individual they spoke with, they could be assured that they were reaching another group of people; often a popula-

tion to which the APP does not otherwise have direct access. They spoke with educators, inspectors, doctors, dentists, nurses; individuals who worked for organizations involved with Hepatitis prevention/education, HIV prevention/education, college student health, information distribution, publishers of health information, etc.

We provided numerous copies of the APP Procedure Manual to Public Health Officials working to establish legislation in their communities. Brochures were available for the taking, and were extremely well received by everyone who stopped by the APP booth. Many people visited to remark that it was nice to see the APP return year after year. Attendees seemed pleased that the APP was not there to sell them any product – that we were truly there to educate, and provide free health and safety information. One woman commented, "You guys have the only decent information at this entire conference!"

David Vidra was the APP representative, and Katherine Ciampi represented the Society of Permanent Cosmetics. David helped cover the APP booth so Paul or Caitlin have an occasional break during the long exhibit hours. Katherine gathered publications being produced about the body modification industry by publishers of health brochures, etc. who had booths at the Expo. The four body art professionals present reviewed and critiqued the brochures for accuracy; and the APP will be providing assistance to improve and correct those with errors. Thanks to David and Katherine for the support and assistance.

BEYOND APHA

Paul and Caitlin spent quiet moments at the booth brainstorming about the APP possibly providing information and materials to members in other countries, so that the APP could have representation at International based Public Health Association Conferences. They discussed the up and coming ACHA (American College Health Association) Conference, and how important it will be for the APP to be there. Lists were made about how to improve upon the APP's presentation at APHA next year and the possibility of presenting a lecture at the Conference was discussed. A lecture regarding the dangers of piercing guns and/or kits could gather support from a public health standpoint from APHA members. This could this make a real difference in future legislation?

The booth was approached by a handsome young man with visible multiple piercings on the last day. He introduced himself as the current President of the ACHA, and was quite emphatic about making sure the APP exhibit at their annual



Paul King

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Septum Piercing Hints and Tips

Elayne Angel
Medical Coordinator
Rings of Desire, New Orleans

Disclaimer: This article is not a "how to pierce" step-by-step instructional guide. It is intended for skilled piercers, to help polish and improve existing abilities. This in no way completely covers all information needed to perform a piercing. Take what works and leave the rest.

The nasal septum is indeed a challenging area to pierce. Septum piercings don't all turn out perfect, but using the following tips and tricks has helped to improve the success ratio significantly. Other piercers have used them with good results. If you've ever had trouble getting septum piercings straight, read on.

Anatomy Assessment

Take a thorough, analytical look at the anatomy you are presented to pierce.

I start with the client seated, with the head tipped far back so I can see up into the nose. Are the nostrils of equal length? How is the overall symmetry? Any scars, marks or other relevant features near where the piercing will be placed? Have there been previous piercing(s) of the same area? Is there any septum deviation? How severe? Is the nose perpendicular to the face?

Communicating with your Client

Once you've surveyed the area, it is wise to report any findings to the client. Some deviation of the septum is not unusual. In this configuration you find somewhat of a "hill" on one side, and a "valley" on the other, in the area where the piercing will be placed. It is not necessarily impossible to get the piercing straight in many of these cases, but it is a lot more challenging.

I have the client take a look in the mirror as I point out the specific

area, and I describe my observations. I have found that with a nose of this shape, there is a tendency for one side of the ring to sit further into down the "valley" side, and to ride up on the "hill" side, resting somewhat twisted. Once the client is educated on what to expect, they are less likely to be disappointed if the piercing isn't straight.

Next, I explain to them one of the wonders of septum piercings that I learned from an apprentice piercing many years ago that went awry. Septum piercings are adjustable! They can be "corrected" by the client during initial healing.

How it happened:

I was supervising one apprentice to pierce the septum of another. It was a technique I no longer use ("receptive forceps" with the piercee in a seated position). When it was over, the piercing was surely the worst I'd ever seen done within that studio. I said, "Oh my, we'll have to take that one out."

But, the tenacious piercee refused. "I'm going to fix it," he insisted. And over the ensuing nights during the first two weeks of healing he took a piece of dental floss, tied it to one side of the ring, and adhered the end of the floss onto the opposite cheek with a Band Aid (to help twist the ring into the "right" spot). Each morning when he awoke, the piercing was closer to the desired position. At the end of two weeks, the piercing looked perfectly placed!

I learned a valuable lesson from that apprentice: septum piercings can be manipulated into a preferred position during initial healing.

So, to come back to the piercing room: When I see a deviated septum, I point out their particular anatomy, and explain that the place-

ment may not come out precisely as desired but that it can be adjusted. If they use clean or gloved fingers to "tweak" or twist the jewelry into the desired direction frequently (10–20 times a day or so) it will move during the first few weeks of healing.

The floss-and-Band Aid method isn't usually necessary. Other piercees have used a small piece of clean cotton ball or the tip of a cotton swab at night, placed into the septum to urge the ring into the correct position.

Prep

I use TechniCare on sterile swabs and clean both sides simultaneously. This allows for solid support and a good scrub on each side, and also gets the prep done more quickly than cleaning one side at a time. It is very important to dry the area completely, in order to mark the placement, and also to seat the receiving tube securely during the actual piercing.

Advising the client to breathe through their mouth during cleaning may be kind, as the cleanser is quite strong smelling.

I always provide a fresh tissue for the client to hold, and make sure they know not to touch their face above the neck until healed (unless their hands are clean). I also make sure they are aware that some bleeding or tears in the eyes is perfectly normal during the procedure.

Marking and Placement

I always mark septum piercings. Even on noses that are shaped to make it difficult to see markings during the piercing procedure, I mark anyway. I do this to fully familiarize myself with the anatomy, and to provide guidelines, if not crystal clear marks.

A "traditionally placed" septum

piercing (at least according to Jim Ward) is not in the cartilage. It rests in the soft, membranous tissue just below the cartilage, but above the skin tissue of the septum. On most individuals this will be well up into the nose, and it usually is very thin skin. I use my pinkie finger on each side to palpate the region and find the "sweet spot" where the jewelry should rest.

On some individuals this region is very small. If a piercee requests larger than 12 gauge initial jewelry, I'll inspect the dimensions of the area first. They can always stretch up later. And, septums are a LOT easier to stretch if you don't pierce the cartilage (or go too low, into the "surface" skin of the septum). Septum size and thickness do not necessarily correlate with overall nose size. Some large noses can have a small "sweet spot"!

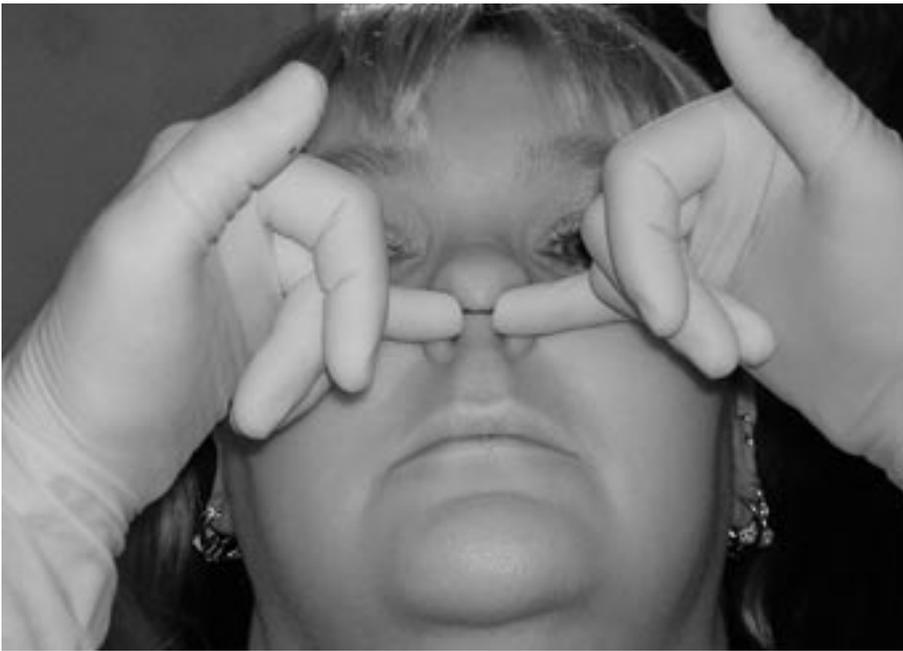
First, I mark a "septum guideline" across the skin on the underside of the septum to show where the piercing will rest (how close to the tip of the nose) and at what angle (perpendicular to the septum). This assures that if one nostril is shorter than the other, the ring will be placed to the shallower nostril. Also, when I perform the piercing, this helps to provide a "sight line" to follow.

Next, I gently push the tip of the nose over to their right, while looking up into the left nostril. Good lighting is vital. I will see a distinct crease where the soft skin of the septum stretches over the cartilage. I mark a dot just in front of that crease, by aligning it with my "septum guideline." That is, I follow the guideline on the underside of the septum up into the nostril and mark the dot just in front of the cartilage.

I repeat the process for the other side, so my marks consist of a dot on each side where the piercing will be placed, and a line across the underside of the septum, towards the tip of the nose.

Once my dots are in place I do the palpation test using my pinkie fingers. I feel for where the piercing should be placed, in the soft gap; and then slowly peel my finger away, watching that the dot emerges from under my finger,





right where it FELT like the piercing should go. I check the both sides and re-mark if needed.

In the final test for straightness, evenness, and accuracy, I use two wooden cotton-tipped swabs. I place the back end of one swab on each dot sticking straight out to the sides. This gives the appearance of a single, long stick through the piercing, and it shows whether the marks are perfect.

Jewelry

Many piercees are unable to display a septum piercing at work, school, or with family. For these individuals, I prefer to use small diameter (usually 3/8") circular barbell. On most noses this jewelry will be as hidden as a septum retainer, when it is flipped up into the nose. Some metal may show on noses that have higher than average nostrils. I suggest a charcoal titanium circular barbell with hematite balls for piercees requiring maximum concealment.

Before the piercing, I use Ring Expanding Pliers (RXPs) to widen the gap on the circular barbell enough so that the ring has a snug fit when slid up into the nose, with the balls still in place. This is less likely to result in lost balls or jewelry, and makes concealment much simpler than taking the balls off to flip up the jewelry. I actually slide the ring onto the septum to check the fit. It is much easier to adjust

the jewelry before it is placed in the piercing.

I try to steer clients away from retainers for initial healing because septum retainers can fall out or be knocked out during cleaning, nose blowing, or sleeping. If concealment is not of concern, a captive ring is fine.

Positioning for Piercing

To perform the piercing, I have the piercee recline flat on a table. After I have prepared my equipment, I position the client so that their head is hanging off the back of the table. Their neck is fully hyper-extended so that I can see right up inside of

the nose from where I stand at the head of the table above them. I have the table down quite low (or I stand on a step stool) so that I am well over the top of them for the best view.

It isn't very comfortable for the client, but I don't keep them in that position for long, and it yields superior results, due to the optimal visualization of the area.

Equipment

I use a clear Pyrex needle receiving tube (NRT) on the exit side of the piercing. The tube should be a little larger than the gauge of the piercing. For example, an 8 gauge tube works well for a 12 gauge piercing. Generally I use the same gauge needle and jewelry.

The clear Pyrex makes a big improvement in the ability to see exactly where you are placing the tube during the procedure.

Tissue Manipulation

Tissue manipulation is probably the single most important technique to improving septum piercings.

I place the receiving tube on the exit side over the dot. By using the clear Pyrex NRT, I can actually see when I have the dot centered in the lumen of the tube. Then, I use the padded end of a cotton swab on the entrance dot. Keeping the tissue in place between these two objects I massage the area gently, applying





Checking the fit of the jewelry

equal pressure from both sides in a tiny, circular motion.

As I massage, for 20-30 seconds, I speak to the client, explaining what I'm doing and why. If the tissue seems challenging for any reason, I might persist for 45-60 seconds of manipulation.

The benefits of tissue manipulation:

1. It seats the tube so that the NRT doesn't slide during the piercing
2. It thins the tissue you will pierce and helps the needle glide through easily
3. It compacts the two membranes so there is less slippage during the piercing
4. It numbs the area resulting in a more comfortable piercing for the client
5. It helps to even out the area on difficult or asymmetrical anatomy

The Piercing Itself

I keep the NRT in place (by now there is a small groove in the tissue which keeps the tube in the correct position). I adjust my grip so that I hold the NRT securely between thumb and index finger, (with the back end against the edge of my palm). I purposely use this grasp to make use of the long, straight line of the tube, which gives me the lon-

gest possible sight line to help get the piercing straight.

I hold the piercing needle between thumb, middle, and ring fingers for stability and place my index finger on the back end of the needle.

With the bevel of the needle facing up, I position the tip near the back edge of the entrance dot. I try not to touch the tip to the tissue until I'm actually going through. My hand positions may be supported by the use of my pinkie finger(s) on the face.

I line up the needle, the mark

across the center of the nose, and the line of the receiving tube on the exit side. This should all make a nice, straight line that is parallel to the floor, and perpendicular to the nose.

Keeping everything in a straight line, I swiftly apply even pressure from both sides, barely perceptibly pulling up towards the ceiling (away from the face) with both hands as I pierce. This very minute maneuver makes the tissue taut, prevents slipping, and helps to get the piercing straight.

I transfer the jewelry and then let them slide down onto the table so the head is supported comfortably. I finish securing the jewelry, and apply a cooling saline pad to the area. If there is any bleeding I apply pressure with swabs. If I have inserted a circular barbell for concealment purposes, I require that they let me show them how to flip it up and down before they leave. (I do it for them, and offer instruction as they watch in the mirror).

The majority of clients report that it is a very easy piercing that doesn't hurt at all.

Adjustability

Remember, if it doesn't come out placed exactly as you'd like, instruct the client to adjust it during the first two weeks of healing.

Feel free to contact me if you have questions or input.



NEW HIRE PAPERWORK

by Crystal Sims-Taylor
Evolution Body Piercing

Welcome to Part 2 of the Employee Management Series. In Part 1, we discussed interviewing and hiring a new employee. In this issue, we will discuss paperwork for you and your new employee. Many items listed below are forms that can be acquired through government agencies or purchased in office supply stores, but there are some that you will want to create yourself. With the basic guidelines below, you can use any word processing program to develop forms that are personalized and effective.

Upon hiring someone, you will need to start a file for important documentation. Most of the items that are required for this file are discussed below, but it would be wise to check with an attorney and an accountant to be sure you comply with all local regulations and tax laws.

A good place to start your new employee's file will be with a basic employee information form. This should contain important information such as name, address, date of birth, social security number, who to contact in case of an emergency, etc. This would also be a good place to put a checklist of other forms that you will be keeping on file. This checklist should be made based on laws in your area. It might include:

- Photocopy of the employee's ID
- W-4 form (required by the IRS) I-9 form (required by the US Department of Justice)
- Hepatitis B vaccination information (or declination form)
- Valid permit or license (if applicable)
- Bloodborne pathogens training certificate
- First Aid certification
- CPR certification

A good way to start any employee/employer relationship off right is with an **employment contract**. Having this will ensure that there are no misunderstandings in what is being offered and what is expected. This can be a very simple, fill-in-the-blanks form or it can be a very detailed legal document drawn up by your attorney. The important thing is that it covers the necessary information and that all aspects are clear to you and to your new employee. Both parties must sign it. Typically an employment contract will address the following:

- Position and job duties
- Rate of pay and pay schedule
- Benefits and date of eligibility
 - Employee discounts
 - Health insurance
 - Vacation/sick pay
 - 401K plan

If you do not have an employment contract or if confidentiality is not addressed in it, then it is also a good idea to create a **confidentiality agreement**. Things that you might want to keep confidential include vendor or pricing information, marketing strategy or information, sales figures and anything else you don't want the public or your competitors to know. It is also wise to request that employees not share information about their salary or commission to other employees.

With the new hire paperwork out of the way, it is time to start training your new employee. With training comes, you guessed it, more paperwork. It is absolutely vital to document every portion of the training process. A training checklist that includes everything you plan to cover with them can be an invaluable tool here. This checklist should have a place for the employee and the trainer to sign and date each item as it is learned. Training checklists will typically include the following:

- Bloodborne Pathogens Training. Please note that even if your employee has had this training before, OSHA requires that bloodborne pathogens training be offered that is specific to your studio and includes an explanation of your exposure control plan.
- Infection Control. Trainers should verify that the employee is able to recognize, prevent and remedy cross-contamination.
- Checklist of materials that must be read and understood such as:
 - Local laws on body art
 - Your studio's policies and procedures

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ULTRASONICS in the Piercing Studio

(Editor's note: Again we have a technical article that is more challenging to read than others. But if you read and understand it, you will be improving yourself as a safe, conscientious piercer. Read it all!)

What is an Ultrasonic?

Hopefully, by now, all professional piercers are using ultrasonic cleaners before sterilizing used instruments and tools. Ultrasonic machines are little workhorses, but most of us don't even think about what they do and how they do it.

We know that an ultrasonic is a machine that is used to remove debris from our instruments with sound waves, but most piercers probably do not really understand the process. Do you know how it works and if you are even using it correctly?

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) defines an ultrasonic cleaner as, "A device that removes debris by a process called 'cavitation,' in which waves of acoustic energy are propagated in aqueous solutions to disrupt the bonds that hold particulate matter to surfaces."

That is a mouthful. But, by understanding the process of cavitation we can clean our tools more effectively, which in turn leads to a more productive sterilization cycle, and thus safer equipment and piercing within the studio.

Why Pre-clean Before Sterilizing?

If debris (blood or lubricant) is not removed from the instruments it can interfere with microbial inactivation, which could compromise the sterilization process. Basically, any matter left on whatever you might be autoclaving insulates pathogens from chemicals you soak the items in, and the heat and pressure of your autoclave.

How Ultrasonics Work

Enter the ultrasonic; ultrasound is a sound with a pitch so high that the human ear cannot hear it. Frequencies above 18 Kilohertz (or 18,000 cycles per second) are usually considered ultrasonic, and the tabletop ultrasonics used by tattoo and piercing studios commonly produce frequencies above 50 Kilohertz (kHz). In order to have an understanding of ultrasonics it is necessary to first have a basic comprehension of how sound waves travel.

A stereo speaker is a good example of "vibratory" sound waves generated by mechanical movement. As the speaker cone moves back and forth, the air in front of the speaker cone is alternately compressed then rarefacted (decreased in density) to produce sound waves, which travel through the air until they finally dissipate. In much the same way, any point in our ultrasonic solution is alternately subjected to compression and then rarefaction.

The points of compression have a positive pressure; the points of rarefaction have a negative pressure.

During the ultrasonic process, the magnitude of the negative pressure in the areas of rarefaction becomes so great that it actually causes the solution to fracture or tear, which creates a "bubble." This phenomenon is called cavitation.

As the sound waves pass, the "bubbles" oscillate under the influence of the positive pressure, eventually growing to an unstable size. This causes the bubble to violently collapse resulting in implosions, which cause shock waves to be radiated out from the implosion sites. The collapse and implosion of numerous cavitation bubbles throughout the ultrasonic solution, results in forces so great that the contaminants either dissolve into the solution or are displaced from the surface of the tools.

Temperature is Important, Too

Temperature is an important consideration in maximizing the cavitation intensity because changes in temperature result in changes in three important factors:

1. viscosity
2. the solubility of gases in the solution
3. vapor pressure

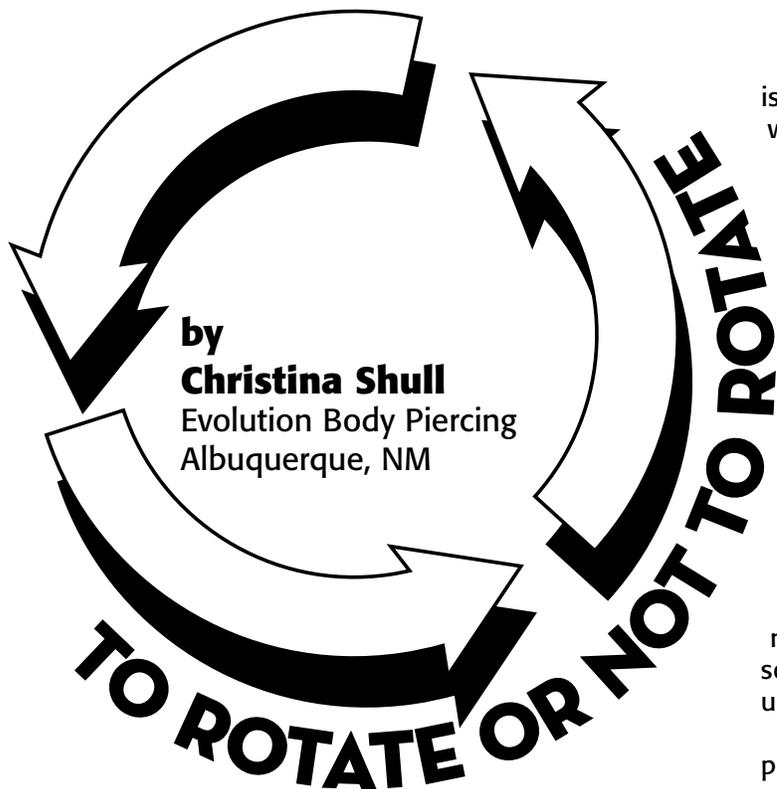
All of these affect cavitation intensity. In pure water the cavitation effect is maximized at about 160 degrees F. However, for our purposes we should try to keep the temperature less than 140 degrees F to prevent coagulation of blood on the instruments (coagulated blood is more difficult to remove than normal blood).

The viscosity of a liquid must be minimized for maximum cavitation effect. Viscous liquids are sluggish and cannot respond quickly enough to form cavitation bubbles and violent implosions. The viscosity of most liquids is reduced as temperatures are increased. Additionally, for effective cavitation the cleaning solution must have as little dissolved gas as possible. Gas dissolved in the liquid is released into the bubble during the bubble growth phase of cavitation. This gas becomes trapped in the bubble during the implosion phase, which prevents a violent implosion required for the desired ultrasonic effect. The amount of dissolved gas in a liquid is reduced as temperature is increased.

For those who would like to delve further into the science behind cavitation, visit www.blackstone-ney.com and see the "Articles and Publications" section for an article entitled "Fundamental Theory and Application."

If your ultrasonic unit is not heated (I was always told heat is bad) it is possible to de-gas your cleaning solution by first running your ultrasonic with just the cleaning solution (no tools). This results in cavitation bubbles containing gas, which do not collapse all the way to implosion, but rather result in small pockets of compressed gas in the solution. These small gas bubbles group together until they finally become buoyant enough to rise to the surface. Time for degassing your solution will vary from unit to unit, so read your owner's manual,

—continued on page 22



Aftercare guidelines for body piercing have come a long way over the years. The days of Hibiclens, Hydrogen Peroxide, and Neosporin are almost over. Most piercers today would agree that the best aftercare currently available consists of saline/sea salt soaks followed by use of an antimicrobial or antibacterial soap. No matter how much we agree on that aftercare regimen, there is one aspect of the cleaning routine that is still widely debated; should the jewelry be rotated through the piercing?

I have heard this debate on various occasions, one of which involves the piercers at the studio where I am currently piercing. Two of us feel that rotating the jewelry through a healing piercing just lengthens the healing time, while the other three piercers feel that rotating the jewelry is beneficial to the client's healing.

Based on the APP piercers whose aftercare sheets are on file, over 80% suggest rotating the jewelry while cleaning, 15% are not that specific, 5% suggest not rotating the jewelry, and much to my surprise, one studio's aftercare includes both options and the theory behind each. (These figures, although the best I could produce, are not 100 percent accurate, as some of the aftercare sheets are from years ago and might be out of date.)

While the reasoning behind rotating the jewelry is mainly to clean the inside of the piercing and to aid the body in discharging lymph, plasma and dead cells, there are many theories behind not rotating.

One reason for not rotating jewelry is that unless aftercare suggestions are followed precisely (sea salt soaking is done immediately before using soap), dried matter can be run through the piercing, introducing outside bacteria into the body and possibly causing microscopic tears to the inside of the piercing.

Realistically, no matter how thoroughly the aftercare is explained via verbal and/or written instructions, we know that there are plenty of clients who do not always do their sea salt soaking or spend an adequate amount of time in the shower before rotating their jewelry.

Some piercers also believe that even with proper salt soaking prior to showering, rotating the jewelry can still damage the newly forming epithelial cells, which could complicate the healing process by prolonging the healing time and make the piercing more prone to scarring. Ron Garza, of A Million Tattoos, states damage to the healing tissue as one of the reasons he does not suggest rotating as part of his aftercare.

Other piercers do not recommend rotating, as they believe that the inside of the body does not need help in cleaning itself. Some cite the "For External Use Only" label on antimicrobial and antibacterial soaps, considering "external" being equal to "epidermal use only."

Another concern about rotating cleanser into the piercing is that because the recommended soaps, except for Satin, have not been tested for anything other than hand washing, they should not be used in the body, as they could be a bit harsh and irritating to the piercing, especially if the client does not move the jewelry under running water to remove all cleanser.

Some piercers feel that if their clients are properly doing their sea salt soaking, they do not have a need for any other products, especially cleansers. Years ago, Phish, of Slave to the Needle, removed both rotation of the jewelry and the use of products other than sea salt soaks from his aftercare, and since then he has seen remarkable improvements in his clients' healing.

Piercers at Halo advise against rotation of the jewelry, as they have seen a reduction in healing times when the jewelry is left in place during the cleaning regimen.

While many piercers that I spoke with have very strong reasons behind not rotating, which they claim can have very adverse effects, some piercers advise against rotating simply because it does not do anything beneficial, but does not do anything harmful either. When I first became a piercer, I was taught to advise against rotating for all the above reasons, and for the first couple of years, I would only advise rotating the jewelry if the client accidentally turned soap into the piercing. Then, the client had a reason to rotate, as they did not want the cleanser to stay in the piercing.

This was my personal opinion on rotating until I began researching the aftercare of various studios and talked to one of the industry's leading experts on aftercare. Upon discussing the matter with Steve Joyner, who has taught aftercare at the APP Vegas conferences and has worked with Care-Tech Laboratories (the makers of Satin and Technicare), I am now beginning to think that maybe both sides of the argument have some validity and that a combination of the two theories could be more appropriate.

What if the question isn't whether the jewelry should

Bend for right nostril or left nostril
(bead is away from you)

right nostril **left nostril**

Adjust U-turn to less than 180 degrees.

Bad
Too tight of a turn will pinch thicker cartilage hurting your client, making installation and removal more painful/difficult.

Good
A relaxed U-turn will allow easier insertion and removal and is less likely to tear the fragile lining of the piercing.

Adjust angle of U-turn in relation to Shaft
(tail of U-turn is going away from you)

Better
A "slight" bend of less than 90 degrees will help the Tail of the U-turn hook behind the ridge inside the nostril keeping it in place. (With the U-turn going away from you this nostril screw is bent for the customers right nostril)

Ok

Bad

Removal *

1. Move U-turn of nostril screw to its lowest/loosest position, usually to the point it is hanging closest to the nostril opening.
2. Make sure the nostril screw is clean on the inside, free of any deposits, if it is too dirty send the customer home to clean it.
3. Apply a small amount of Techni-care inside the nostril and to the U-turn of the nostril screw. Home removals should be done after a hot shower, Provon can be used to lubricate the inside for removal.
4. Repeat Step 1.
5. Apply a downward motion to Bead of the nostril screw. If you pull out or towards the face it will not work well or comfortably. Sometimes a slight upward lift on the U-turn inside the nose in conjunction with the external downward motion will make the Corner transition smoother.
6. Twist the nostril screw in the appropriate direction to complete removal of nostril screw.

* This only works well if the nostril screw was bent in the proper direction initially.

Anatomy of the Nostril Screw

Halo Precision Piercing, LLC. 2003 TM

Nostril Screw poster courtesy of Halo in Phoenix, Arizona

Editor's note: Something to consider is that the poster does not address the post length, which will vary depending on nostril thickness. Also, it appears to me that the left and right curves are opposite from the way in which I use nostril screws. Perhaps both ways work when the post length is correct?

or shouldn't be rotated, but **when** the jewelry should be rotated, and under what circumstances? The aftercare that Steve is currently suggesting consists of a sea salt soak followed by washing the jewelry and the outside of the piercing with either Satin or Provon in the shower under running water. Then, unlike the standardized aftercare, once the soap is thoroughly rinsed away, the jewelry is rotated through the piercing under running water without the use of an antimicrobial soap.

There are two reasons for rotating the jewelry without a cleanser. By turning the jewelry under running water, the client is removing any soap that might have ended up in the piercing. No matter how careful the individual is in keeping the jewelry stationary while applying cleanser, there is always a chance that soap could end up in the piercing unintentionally, and possibly unnoticed. The other more important reason behind this is that the body does need some assistance in discharging lymph, dead skin cells, and other matter. According

to Steve, friction, not cleansers, is the key to ridding the inside of the piercing of dischargeable matter.

Although this was not the conclusion I initially had in mind for this article, this makes sense.

At the end of the day, I am now thinking that rotating without cleaning products could be an excellent compromise because it combines the most reasonable aspects of both sides of the debate into something very simple and understandable. For those of us who decide to experiment with other cleaning regimen options, maybe we can update our standardized aftercare if we see improvements in our clients' healing that appears to be the direct result of rotating without cleansers or not rotating at all.

If anyone has any additional input on this matter or would like to share their aftercare experiences, I would love to do a follow-up. Feel free to email me with any questions, comments, or suggestions at PiercerChrissy@msn.com

PIERCING IN THE NEWS

Janet Jackson Bares Pierced Nipple at Superbowl

This year's superbowl held a visual treat and surprise that was unsurpassed in the history of the event: part of Janet Jackson's costume was torn away during a live half-time song and dance routine with pop star Justin Timberlake. A pierced nipple with sunburst nipple shield was revealed when the right breast cup of her black leather bodice was torn away. She expressed shock at the exposure, but the snaps visible on the costume provide evidence that this was a planned occurrence. And a January 28 story on MTV's Web site promised "shocking moments" during Jackson's performance.

At the end of a song titled "Rock Your Body," Jackson allowed Timberlake to rip away the costume, as they sang: "Gonna have you naked by the end of this song," exposing the pierced nipple and fancy jewelry to some 99 million viewers.

The jewelry was purchased for Janet at Taurian in Houston, Texas. The shield had been purchased from Gauntlet (the first piercing specialty business in the U.S.—now defunct). It waited in the display case for many years, and was polished weekly.

As a result of her revelation at the show, there was a tremendous outrage. People complained that it was "unAmerican" and after the CBS switchboard was flooded with angry phone calls the network said, "CBS deeply regrets the incident that occurred during the Super Bowl halftime show."

"We attended all rehearsals during the week, and there was no indication any such thing would happen. "We would like to apologize to anyone who was offended," said CBS.

Meanwhile, a woman in the US is suing for millions of dollars in punitive damages for showing the flash. Terri Carlin, a 47-year-old bank clerk in Knoxville, Tennessee, is seeking "maximum" compensation from Jackson and Justin Timberlake, as well as from Viacom, the owner of CBS, which broadcast the event.

Federal Communications Commission (FCC) chairman Michael Powell described it as a "classless, crass and deplorable stunt."

Editor's note: Some of the commercials shown during the game featured previews for violent movies and jokes employing scatological humor which are far more objectionable to me. It was just a breast. A pretty, fancy one, too. Lots of women have them. And, as we all know, lots of women have them pierced. What's all the fuss!?

Ear Stud Gun Infections in the News

An article published in the February 25, 2004 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) reported risks of ear cartilage piercings. Seven cases of serious bacterial infections were caused by upper ear cartilage piercings performed with an ear stud gun at a jewelry kiosk in an Oregon mall. The *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* infections were confirmed via cultures.



"Everything old is new again." A sunburst nipple shield like the one flashed by Janet Jackson at the Superbowl. The design was by Gauntlet's Jim Ward and dates from the mid 1970s.

Unfortunately, a number of the individuals ended up with visibly deformed ears as a result.

One problem was that doctors initially misdiagnosed the problem in some of the patients. They treated the infection like a regular skin infection, and gave the patients the wrong antibiotic, leading to more serious consequences due to the delay of appropriate treatment.

Some workers sprayed the gun and the stud with a commercial disinfectant. The researchers found the bacteria growing in the disinfectant and in the sink drain. Most of the kiosk employees had little or no training.

Piercing guns are prohibited for piercing anything but ear lobes in Oregon and a number of other states.

The release of the JAMA article led to a host of related articles circulating on the internet about the risks of ear cartilage piercing. The overall message was that ear cartilage is more easily infected than the ear lobe. Though the reports were also clear specifically about the dangers of the guns, and those seeking piercings were advised to find experienced body piercers who understand sterile techniques.

Piercing Pioneer Needs Your Help

Many of you have seen the internet posting;

"Upon the day Raelyn Gallina returned home from her Mother's funeral in September, she was diagnosed with the rarest, deadliest form of breast cancer. She had to start chemotherapy immediately. On December

8th, she will be having a double mastectomy. After that, she will have more chemotherapy and start radiation treatments five days a week for many months. Raelyn is just 49 years old, and has always been extremely healthy, energetic and powerful, so this comes as a huge shock."

"The good news is that Raelyn has a chance of getting through all this, as the cancer seems to have been caught in time. Her devoted partner of ten years, Babs is by her side every step of the way and of enormous help and comfort. (Babs' beloved brother died just before Thanksgiving.) This is all terrifying and exhausting, but the gals are still managing to keep their spirits up most of the time."

Raelyn Gallina is a name that should be familiar to all of the APP membership. She has been piercing for over two decades, making a name for herself as not only a piercer, but jeweler, scarification artist and brander. From her background in the SM, lesbian, and women's communities, she was instrumental in bringing piercing to a whole new audience. Though based in California, she traveled often across the country doing numerous demos, workshops and other presentations. Her focus has always been on the spiritual, and she has always been quite generous in sharing the wealth of her knowledge with others. Her devotion to this industry and those in it is obvious. She was among those included in the first meeting of the APP.

All this should be well known to the membership and attendees at this year's APP Conference, but I hope to do more than just sing her praises. The posting continues;

"We would like to ask you for your prayers and good wishes for Raelyn right now. Visualize her having the strength to withstand and survive her cancer treatments. See her in good health, send her love, cards and letters of support."

"Financially things are very rough for Raelyn and Babs right now. Raelyn has been too sick to work much. She didn't have health insurance or savings due to the bad economy, being a freelancer, and living in the expensive bay area. Babs cleans houses for a living, and has had to cancel a lot of work to nurse and help Raelyn. They won't be able to make much money for at least the next seven or eight months. They need our financial help so they don't lose their home, to cover living expenses and health care needs. We urge you to send financial gifts. Organize benefits in your town. Send whatever you can. Show Raelyn we love her, and want to keep her around! Show them we are the great community and friends we say we are!"

The piercing industry has grown, in the last twenty years, from a small underground community to a large social and economic force. We have discovered that our strength in numbers and our earning capacity has made us a force to be reckoned with regarding legislators, health care providers, and educators in ways that were not possible on any scale even five years ago. Now it's time to use our numbers to really make a difference with one of our own.



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Donations can be sent to:

<http://www.paypal.com> raelynlove@sbcglobal.net

Or send directly to:

Raelyn Gallina (and Babs)

P. O. BOX 20034

Oakland, CA 94620.

You can check on Raelyn's progress through a web site that Babs has set up at:

<http://www.geocities.com/>

raelynlove@sbcglobal.net/mypage.html

I encourage everyone to help however they can. If not for people like Raelyn Gallina, we may all be in quite a different place today. As the piercing industry struggles to define its identity and write its history, it's important that those so instrumental in creating it are not forgotten.

Jim Weber

Infinite Body Piercing, Inc.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Infinite Body Piercing in Philadelphia is looking for an experienced piercer. Female preferred, but not required. Be prepared to submit portfolio, resumé, and video. Contact the shop at 215-923-7335 or by e-mail at infbod@infinitebody.com.

MATERIALS: **STEEL**

Editor's note: Again, this is some highly technical information, but it will make you a better-informed piercer. It isn't terribly long; buckle down and read it all the way to the end!

In the previous article "Understanding Steel" in *POINT 24*, we discussed and defined the various terms and steel standards associated with body piercing jewelry, and also a little about surface finish and chromium oxide. Using the last article as a stepping-stone, we delve a little more into technical aspects and explain why the differences in the two standards are important.

To fully appreciate the differences between 316LVM and ASTM F-138 it is important to understand some of the basic steel terminology.

Grain The easiest way to describe grain would be to have you visualize a piece of glass upon which ice crystals have formed. As the ice begins to freeze it crystallizes in many places at once. Each place where it starts to freeze produces a point where crystals form in a relatively orderly fashion. With steel, as it cools from a liquid state to a solid, crystal formations also appear, but instead of two dimensional, like a window, it is in a three dimensional matrix.

Grain size is a measure of crystal size, usually reported in terms of average diameter in millimeters, grains per square millimeters, or grains per cubic millimeter.

To understand **Grain boundaries**, think of the frozen glass again. The ice crystals start to freeze in several places at the same time. Eventually the crystals at one starting point run into the crystals from a different starting point. Where these two crystal structures meet is called grain boundary. Of course, this would be crystal formation within a 3-D matrix of molten steel.

An **inclusion** is foreign material in the metal; an

impurity, metallic or non-metallic, which is trapped in the steel. There are a huge number of things that cause inclusions (oxides, carbides, silicates, sulfides, etc.). It is such an important part of steel manufacturing that they have even typed different kinds of inclusions: globular, complex, stringer, etc.

Annealing is a process that involves heating a metal to a specific temperature, holding that temperature for an extended amount of time, and then slowly letting the metal cool. Annealing has various benefits that will be expanded upon later.

Scale is another term for rust or an oxide. Normally we think of rust as Iron Oxide, however, there are other types of oxides that can actually be beneficial such as Chromium Oxide.

Intergranular corrosion is a type of corrosion that happens at the grain boundaries. It can be caused by the chemical composition of the steel or because of the improper heat treatment leading to Chromium-containing carbides precipitated on the grain boundaries.

Pitting corrosion is a type of corrosion that occurs in chlorine-containing solutions.

Austenitic Austenite is a type of Iron crystal formed during the cooling process, which is characterized by a Face Centered Cubic structure. To view examples of these crystalline structures see www.okstate.edu/jgelder/solstate.html.

Ferritic Ferrite is a type of Iron crystal formed during the cooling process, which is characterized by a Body Centered Cubic structure.

So how does ASTM F-138 differ from 316LVM?

Chemical Composition Requirements

	AISI max %	ASTM max %	ISO max %
Carbon	.03	.03	.03
Manganese	2.0	2.0	2.0
Phosphorous	.045	.025	.025
Sulfur	.03	.01	.01
Silicon	.75	.75	1.0
Chromium	16.0-18.0	17.0-19.0	17.0-19.0
Nickel	10.0-14.0	13.0-15.0	13.0-15.0
Molybdenum	2.0-3.0	2.25-3.0	2.25-3.5
Nitrogen	.1	.1	.1
Copper	No standard	.5	.5
Iron	Balance	Balance	Balance

1. There are elemental compositional requirements differences.
2. There are metallurgical requirements for ASTM F-138.
3. There are special test requirements for ASTM F-138.
4. There is manufacturer's certification that the material was produced and tested.

1. First we will look at the **elemental compositional requirements**. You may remember this graph from the previous steel article. Keep in mind that each one of the elements on the chart affects the steel's characteristics in some way.

1. Chromium is the essential raw material in stainless steel for conferring corrosion resistance. Chromium binds with Oxygen from the air to form Chromium Oxide (Cr₂O₃). Chromium Oxide is a very thin, strong, adherent layer of scale, which is self-repairing if it is scratched or damaged. Remember rust is an oxide formed from a chemical reaction between Carbon and Oxygen, so this thin molecular coating of Cr₂O₃ actually prevents O₂ from coming into contact with the Carbon that is in the steel. The committee raised the minimum level of Chromium to insure that there would be enough present to form Cr₂O₃ if some of the Chromium has been depleted in other ways (like binding with Carbon to form Chromium Carbides). Chromium Oxide does not do well in Chlorine solutions; the chlorine disrupts the scale and can cause pitting.

2. Molybdenum is the right hand man of Chromium. It binds to Carbon, which helps limit the amount of Carbon available to tie up Chromium, to precipitate Chromium Carbide. Chromium Carbide is bad because it forms zones of lower Chromium content around the precipitations. The zones of lower Chromium are not capable of forming adequate amounts of the protective passive film (Cr₂O₃) any more, and thus the grain boundaries are attacked first in a corrosive environment. Molybdenum is also the major element improving the resistance to pitting corrosion. Molybdenum helps yields a fine (small) grain structure with overall improvements to strength. This fine structure is the result of the stable, even distribution of Molybdenum carbide. These Carbides can also serve to stabilize the stainless, which can otherwise show temper brittleness due to other Carbide precipitations.

3. Nickel provides a high degree of ductility (ability to change shape without fracture) to the steel, as well as help in resistance to corrosion. Nickel also helps lower the critical heat treatment temperatures and gener-

ally allows for easier conditioning. Nickel strengthens and toughens steel by dissolution into the ferritic matrix.

4. Copper is beneficial in corrosion resistance, but the ASTM F-138 limits the amount that can be used.

5. Phosphorous and Sulfur, are byproducts of production and are seen as impurities. By lowering the amounts of these two elements, the effect is to have cleaner steel. These elements tend to gather at grain boundaries, which could cause the creation of inclusions.

2. Continuing on with how the ASTM F-138 standard differs from the 316 L standard, we need to address the **Metallurgical Requirements** set forth by section 7 of the standard:

Section 7.1 states "the material shall contain no delta ferrite phase when it is examined metallographically at 100X magnification."

What this means is that when the stock that your jewelry manufacturer receives from the mill arrives it will be free of Body Centered Cubic grain structures within the austenitic matrix at 100X magnification.

Section 7.2 of the standard sets limits for "the micro-cleanliness of the steel" by dictating the type and size of allowable inclusions. The 316 L standard does not have an equivalent cleanliness standard.

3. Another difference is that the F-138 requires Special Tests to ensure a fine grain size and the ability to resist intergranular corrosion as set forth by section 9 of the standard.

Section 9.1 states "The steel shall be capable of passing the intergranular corrosion susceptibility test in accordance with Practice E of Practices A 262".

Section 9.2 states "The grain size shall be five or finer when tested in accordance with Test Methods E 112."

Both of these tests are justified in the X1. Rationale section: "There is general consensus that a homogeneous metallurgical structure will be superior with respect to corrosion and fatigue resistance. Based upon this, metallurgical requirements include fine-grained austenitic structure free of ferrite, with low micro-inclusion content, and capability of passing an intergranular corrosion susceptibility test."

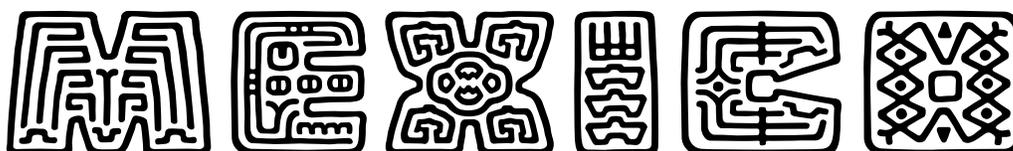
4. Certification—The final difference is that you don't have to take anybody's word for the purity of the steel they are selling you. If the jewelry manufacturer is buying ASTM F-138 certified steel, they are proud of that and will generally be happy to provide you a current mill certificate for the batch of steel that they are using. It will state on the mill cert whether the steel was produced and tested in accordance to the F-138 standard.

What this all boils down to, is that the standards organization (ASTM) got together to make a standard

—continued on page 19



The Piercing Scene in



In December 2003 piercer James Maldonado and I traveled to Mexico City to visit with some good friends. We attended a ceremony and became acquainted with the piercing community in the biggest city in the world.

While staying in Mexico City, we were hosted by Ana Paula, and Ruso, the owner/operators of Tonatiuh, a beautiful tattoo, piercing, and henna studio. We could not have been blessed with better guides. All day, every day we were shown the ins and outs of this tremendous and amazing city.

Ana had approached me prior to my arrival and said she thought it would be a great opportunity to bring together the piercers in Mexico and have a round table discussion. She thought they would be interested in the APP and that they would have many questions. Of course I was excited about the opportunity to talk with them, so I gave her the go-ahead to organize the meeting. With the help of Danny Yerna, from Wankatanka, and Gato, from Artes Tribales, the word got out. Danny contacted over a hundred Mexican piercers from all over Mexico via email and arranged a space for us to meet.

Ana, Gato, James, and I hand delivered invitations to some of the more popular studios in the area, taking the opportunity to meet the piercers and invite them personally. It all seemed pretty last minute, but I kept up the hope that foreign piercers would receive us well and see the meeting as an opportunity to share ideas and knowledge.

We assumed perhaps ten or fifteen piercers would be in attendance which would have been great since this gathering was being held on such short notice. Much to my surprise, on the night of the event fifty piercers from all over Mexico arrived and piled into a small Cuban restaurant next to Tribu Tatu.

The owners of the restaurant cleared out all the tables to make room and even served food and drink to all who attended. They were great. Some piercers traveled from as far as five hours away. I had brought only a few press packs and some digital manuals, but we made sure not to send them home empty handed. I had also brought two of Blake Perlingieri's books (*A Brief History of Body Adornment*) to try to sell them, but I ended up raffling them off to the attendees. I was so honored and happy to see everyone, that I wanted them to feel the "APP Love."

Quite honestly, I didn't know where to begin. Ana reminded me that to assume every piercer present had an autoclave would be foolish and that we should address basics from which all could benefit. Ana and Danny had also briefed me on certain disinfectants that are available there and are heavily used. Thanks to Danny's research we were able to bring some facts and statistics to the table that show how these products DON'T do the job. We discussed everything from cleaning procedures to studio set-up. We answered many questions and put some myths to rest. We also

discussed manufacturing of jewelry. The piercing industry in Mexico is saturated with substandard, externally threaded jewelry, usually ranging from the equivalent of \$.20 to \$5 per piece on the street. One of the most popular products readily found in the markets on the street is body jewelry in autoclave packages by the hundreds hanging from a booth. To the untrained eye those little packages make that jewelry look clean or safe. But on closer examination it is just fancy packaging used even on non-autoclavable jewelry.

As Americans our economic situation allows us to charge a decent fee for piercing and jewelry. But in most areas of Mexico, a piercer cannot charge more than twenty dollars for the entire procedure including jewelry. This makes internally threaded jewelry completely unrealistic for most, and an impractical expense for those who choose to stock it.

Mexican piercers use needles and also cannulas (with plastic sleeves) for easy insertion of externally threaded jewelry. They are huge fans of PTFE, and all of the healed surface piercings being worn in the crowd were started with it. The piercers in Mexico have a strong interest in heavy body modifications including implants, scarification, and branding.

It does surprise me that given how geographically close Mexico is to the U.S. there isn't more alliance between piercers in the two countries. The only other American piercer who had done a similar discussion was Nick, from Evolved. This was done at a tattoo convention. (Thanks Nick).

An abundance of information was shared, and I feel that it was well received. There were representatives from three magazines there to report the happenings, and many good comments were made about uniting the community. I believe the country is so large that it is necessary for Mexico to have its own association, although I visited shops that could very well be up to APP standards. I was very impressed at all the studios I visited. The community was strong, and the piercers were friendly.

I hope to return to Mexico to help organize more meetings of this kind. I would like to thank Ana Paula Escalante for all her help, Danny Yerna for being quite possibly the most organized and well-connected piercer in all of Mexico, and Gato for his love and support. These are the future leaders of the Mexican Association of Piercers.

—Alicia Cardenas
APP International Liaison
Twisted Sol, Denver



Elayne Angel of Rings of Desire in New Orleans tied the knot with Jake Miller on November 17, 2003. Congratulations to the happy couple!

Steel

—continued from page 17

specifically for implantable steel. The F-14 Committee on Medical and Surgical Materials and Devices published the **ASTM F-138** standard for the first time in 1971 under the direct responsibility of Subcommittee F04.12 on Metallurgic Materials.

These committees made a conscious decision to change what was being used for implants at the time and they give their rationale at the end of the standard. This standard is more relevant to piercing because it sets requirements for the sole purpose of biocompatibility, whereas the AISI 316 L standards were not really concerned with any aspects other than corrosion resistance.

This is why ASTM F-138 steel IS implant grade, but steel that is 316L or 316LVM is not necessarily implant grade (*unless* it meets the ASTM F-138 standard).

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Associations:

- Association of Safe and Professional Piercing
www.aspp.org.uk
info@aspp.org.uk
44 124 542 9018 (Mark)
OR
+44 18 276 8353 (Annette)
15 Trinity Square, South Woodham Ferrers, Chemsford
Essex UK CM3 5JX
OR
144 St John St., London UK Ec1

This newly forming association will hold educational courses during the Derby Tattoo convention July 17 & 18, 2004

- Erste Organisation Professionellar Piercer e.V.
www.opp-ev.de
info@OPPeV.de
Fon: 0700-16774636
43 Vereinsregister 12561, Postfach 100536, 52005
Aachen
Germany
non profit formed 1997
Membership: 29 Studios
in house standards
institute inspection

Has provided both annual and bi-annual conferences; 2 days with accomodations included €175 per person
Has four Board Members.

- ASAP / Denmark
www.oapp.dk
contact@oapp.dk
Larsbjørnsstræde 15, 1454 KBH k.
Denmark

Non-profit, requires both environmental and personal criteria.

- Erster Schweizerischer Verband Professioneller Piercer
www.piercerverband.ch
Swizerland

re-forming

- Associazione Piercers Tatuatori Professionisti Italiani
www.aptpi.org
info@aptpi.org
Italy
Membership as of November 2003: 10

Non-profit, requires both environmental and personal criteria and visits studios.

First educational seminars held in December, 2003 and was attended by approximately 150 piercers and tattoo artists.

- Vlaamse Piercing Bond
www.vlaamsepiercingbond.org
info@vlaamsepiercingbond.org
Vrijheidstraat 45 - 2000 Antwerpen
Belgium

Non profit formed in 2002 and requires both personal and environmental criteria.

Membership as of November 2003: 5

- Vereniging Professionele Piercers Nederland
www.vppn.nl
info@vppn.nl
0541- 512382
Sânpaed 9, 9024 EC Weidum
Netherlands

Formed in 2002, has five members, adheres to their government's hygiene standard and inspects studios.

- Association des Perceurs de France
www.aperf.com
bureau@aperf.com
France

Non-profit, requires both environmental and personal criteria.

- ASAP / Sweden
www.asap-sweden.se
Sweden

Non-profit, requires both environmental and personal criteria; has five members.

APHA and the APP –continued from page 5

conference in Louisiana. He had taken the time to come back to the Expo Hall that day specifically to invite us.

APP and OUTREACH

Outreach has never been stronger by the APP. Unfortunately, funds are the main thing preventing the APP from doing even more in this area. The Board works tirelessly and with no financial compensation in order to make sure the APP is involved in such outreach, but they can't do it all. The APP calls upon its membership and its supporters at this time for assistance in this area.

If you are interested in performing outreach in your community please contact us at APP 888-888-1277 or info@safepiercing.org. We are interested in having people attend conferences (staff a booth) in their own

communities in the areas of Public Health, High School and College Health, etc. We are looking for individuals to provide the APP's Public Service Announcements to local radio stations. We are hoping to find volunteers to provide lectures to groups in order to continue to educate the general public about health and safety issues and body piercing. People willing to take APP brochures to medical offices, dental offices, emergency rooms, high schools, colleges, etc. are greatly appreciated.

The APP can provide assistance and materials for outreach, often free of charge or at a reduction in cost.

The APP also would love to enlist any people who have grant writing skills and/or experience. Sponsors/ Grants for conference events, special publications, and outreach projects are sorely needed. Please contact us if you want to volunteer in this area.

"Anyone who works is a fool. I don't work - I merely inflict myself upon the public."—Robert Morley

Authored by Caitlin McDiarmid with inspiration by Paul King and Elayne Angel

New Hire Paperwork –continued from page 10

- The APP procedure manual
- Aftercare information and other literature that you distribute to clients
- Any manuals or information gathered from conferences or other reputable studios with which you want your employees to be familiar.
- Basic pricing information
- Processing sales transactions
- Use of forms (special order logs, gift certificate logs, etc.)
- Disclaimers and/or return policies that are given with specific jewelry purchases

If your new employee is an apprentice, you may want to have additional training checklists that will track the progress they make. This can be anything from a tally mark by each procedure they perform to written evaluations from the supervising trainer who watches them work. Even if you are hiring a seasoned piercer whom you have seen pierce before, a trainer should always supervise the first procedures in your studio to ensure proper protocols are followed.

There will always be questions that arise that have not been covered in your training program, so be ready to continually update your system. It is also important that your employees know where to go for answers, be it you or another specified trainer. Keeping everyone on the same page is an ongoing task that will never be complete as long as your studio is evolving with the industry. In the next issue, we will explore different ways of keeping employees updated on changes, productive and happy at your studio.

Ultrasonics

—continued from page 11

consult the manufacturer, or observe your ultrasonic to figure out how long degassing takes by watching the solution until bubbles stop rising to the surface, and a pattern of ripples can be seen.

Ultrasonics and the CDC

The CDC has suggestions throughout its web site www.cdc.gov about using an ultrasonic on tools. Unfortunately, none of it is very centrally located, therefore you will have to dig around the site to find all of their guidelines. The CDC prefers the use of ultrasonics to hand scrubbing of tools because the ultrasonic, if used correctly, is more effective and it also minimizes worker exposure to body fluids. Additionally, the proper use of an ultrasonic does not require that tools be presoaked, unless they are going to be left overnight. If you are going to soak your tools before processing them, the CDC recommends that soaking be done in a detergent or enzymatic solution. High-level disinfectants should not be used as a holding solution because they tend to make blood proteins precipitate, thus making them difficult to remove.

The CDC also notes that the ultrasonic by its nature is very dirty equipment. They suggest that the ultrasonic be separated from the rest of your instrument processing area by a wall, and that appropriate personal protective equipment be used while processing contaminated tools including a mask, eyewear or face shield,

and gown or jacket.

It is important to follow manufacturer guidelines for your unit but the basics remain the same. The enzymatic cleaner that you use should be changed daily, and a basket should be used so that the tools are suspended in the solution. Just sitting the tools in the unit hinders the vibrations that cause cavitation. When placing tools in the basket it is important to avoid overpacking your unit. Do several loads rather than cram all of your tools in after a busy day. The use of an enzymatic cleaner is recommended and it is essential to use it at its proper dilution, check the bottle for dilution ratios. Don't forget to de-gas your solution before adding your tools, especially if you have an unheated unit. Make sure that hinged tools are opened and that all of your tools are completely immersed. After the tools have been ultrasoniced they should be thoroughly rinsed with either distilled water or tap water with a final distilled water rinse. Tools should be visually inspected to insure that all debris has been eliminated then completely dried before being bagged for autoclaving.

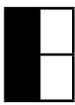
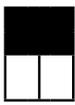
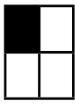
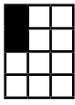
— Jason King, VP
23rd Street Body Piercing
Oklahoma City, OK

Editor's note: remember you need one ultrasonic unit to process contaminated equipment and a second, clean one to remove polishing compound from new jewelry.

ATTENTION Manufacturers & Businesses

The POINT is a quarterly newsletter. It is the only newsletter dedicated to the piercing industry. Our direct mailing list consists mainly of piercers, piercing shops, tattoo studios, and health departments. The newsletters are also distributed to potential members or anyone who is interested. With the 3-hole-punch format, it will continue to be a viable resource and should be part of your advertising budget. *The POINT* can also be viewed as PDF files on our website, increasing the visibility of your company. Nowhere else can you hit the specialized piercing market.

ADVERTISING SPECIFICATIONS

Size		Dimensions	One Insertion	Four Insertions
Inside Front Cover		7.25"w X 9.75"H	\$400	\$350
Inside Back Cover			\$400	\$350
Full Page			\$350	\$325
Half Page—vertical		3.25"w X 9.75"H	\$200	\$180
Half Page—horizontal		7.25" X 4.75"H	\$200	\$180
Quarter Page		3.25"w X 4.75"H	\$90	\$80
Sixth Page—vertical		2.25"w X 4.75"H	\$50	\$45

Call 1-888-888-1APP to place your advertisement in *The Point*. *The Point* is created on a Mac using Adobe InDesign, and Photoshop. Acceptable formats for ads are black and white or grayscale jpeg, gif, eps, tiff, pict, pds or PDF files. If you are sending a digital file please include or embed the fonts. Email designdept@rewardinc.com for details on sending digital files. Camera ready art at 600 dpi or better is acceptable if you don't have a digital file. APP reserves the right to edit ads.

Mail payment and artwork on CD or Zip to:

5456 Peachtree Industrial Blvd. Box 286, Chamblee, GA 30341

Call for Photos

The APP is seriously in need of our OWN collection of piercing photographs. We need pictures of all body, facial and oral piercings. We need examples of both good and bad piercings. You can send us photos in digital format or in hard copy. Email them to info@safepiercing.org or send hard copies, or CDs of JPEGs or TIFFs to:

Association of Professional Piercers
PMB 286 5454 Peachtree Industrial Blvd.
Chamblee, GA 30341

Photos that are sent via email or on CD must be accompanied by mailed in hard-copy paper release forms or we cannot use the photos.

You must use the release forms below. Please feel free to copy them and send one photographer agreement per photographer, and one model release for each model. They must be filled in completely. Please mark your photos to indicate what releases go with which photo(s). If this is not done, we will be unable to use the photos. Please contact us if you have any questions.

PHOTOGRAPHER AGREEMENT

AGREEMENT entered into between _____ (hereinafter referred to as the "Photographer") and The Association of Professional Piercers (APP), (hereinafter referred to as "APP").

The Parties hereto agree as follows:

1. Services to be Rendered. The Photographer agrees to provide photographs at no charge, to be used in any manner as seen fit by the APP including for purposes of furthering education, legislation, and promotion of safe body piercing practices.
2. The APP shall agree, wherever and whenever possible to include a photo credit for the Photographer. The Photographer understands that this may not always be possible.
3. Both parties agree that this Agreement is not an employment agreement, nor does it constitute a joint venture or partnership.
8. This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the parties. Its terms can be modified only by an instrument in writing signed by both parties. This Agreement shall be binding on the parties, their heirs, successors, assigns, and personal representatives.

PHOTOGRAPHER printed name

PHOTOGRAPHER signature

Piercing placement _____ Age of piercing _____ Date _____

MODEL RELEASE

I _____ ("Model") hereby grant to the Association of Professional Piercers (APP) and their legal representatives and assigns, the irrevocable and unrestricted right to use and publish photographs of me, or in which I may be included in whole or in part, for education, legislation, for the advancement of the organization, and any other purpose and in any manner and medium; to alter the same without restriction; and to copyright the same.

I hereby release Photographer and APP and his/her/their legal representatives and assigns from all claims and liability relating to said photographs.

I am of full age and have the right to contract in my own name. I have read the foregoing and fully understand the contents thereof. This release shall be binding upon me and my heirs, legal representatives, and assigns.

MODEL printed name

MODEL signature

Date

WITNESS printed name

WITNESS signature

Date

Piercing placement _____ Age of piercing _____ Piercer (optional) _____

The POINT

The Association of Professional Piercers
PMB 286
5456 Peachtree Industrial Blvd.
Chamblee, GA 30341

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We Need You!

The APP needs your help to support our mission of disseminating of vital health, safety and education information to piercers, piercees, medical professionals and the general public. Your donation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law because we are a Non-profit corporation.

YOU choose where your dollars will be spent:

- AL D Scholarship Fund
- Legislation Outreach
- Educational Outreach
- Wherever it is most needed

YOU choose your Donation Level:

- Bamboo: \$20.00
- Steel: \$50.00
- Gold: \$100.00
- Platinum: \$250.00
- Other \$ _____

Bamboo Level receives an APP bumper sticker

Steel Level and up receive a full length video of the APP's 2001 Anthropology course featuring Jim Ward. This is NOT available for purchase anywhere, at any price!

Your name as you would like it to appear in the POINT as an APP supporter:

My check payable for \$ _____
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APP
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5456 Peachtree Industrial Blvd.
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Thank you for your support! We appreciate all contributions.