

Body Piercing

Infection Prevention and Control Information for Operators

What is the Health Risk?

Instruments and equipment used for body piercing may become contaminated with blood or body fluids that contain blood-borne infections such as those that cause hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV. Other infections, such as fungal or bacterial infections, may occur if equipment is not properly cleaned and disinfected or sterilized.

You do not have to see blood or body fluids on instruments, equipment or on surfaces for an infection to occur.

Protect Yourself

- Thoroughly wash hands before and after each client using liquid soap under warm running water and then dry with a disposable paper towel.
- Alcohol based hand rubs can be used as an alternative to hand washing if hands are not visible soiled.
- New, single-use, disposable gloves must be worn for each client and discarded after each client. Wash hands before and after using gloves.
- Ensure the area of the client's body you will be working on is free from any cuts, wounds, rashes or visible infections.
- Needles must be discarded immediately after use into a puncture resistant sharps container labeled "biohazard". Never overfill, empty or touch contents of sharps containers..
- Keep your vaccinations up-to-date
 - Hepatitis B vaccine – 3 doses
 - Tetanus vaccine – every 10 years
 - Influenza vaccine – every year

Protect Your Clients

- All needles used are sterile, single-use and disposed of immediately after use.
- Open sterile, packaged equipment immediately prior to starting the procedure.
- Needles must be cleaned in an ultrasonic cleaner prior to packaging for sterilization.
- Dermal punch tools must be purchased as sterile, single-use disposable items. Devices cannot be re-used and must be disposed of in an approved sharps container immediately after use.
- Cork used to catch the needle must be single-use and discarded into the sharps container with the needle attached.
- Closed-ended receiving tubes must be sterile, single-use and disposable. Open ended receiving tubes can be cleaned with a wire brush and sterilized between uses.
- All jewelry used for body piercing must be sterile. If piercing jewelry is made or modified by a piercer prior to use, it must be cleaned in an ultrasonic cleaner and then be packaged and sterilized by an approved method.

- **Site preparation:**
 - Skin must be cleansed with an antiseptic (povidone-iodine solution, chlorhexadine 2-4% chlorhexadine gluconate, 0.5% chlorhexadine gluconate with 70% alcohol, 70% alcohol).
 - Mark the piercing site with a (iodine) felt tip pen.
 - Once the pen has dried, clean the site again with the approved skin antiseptic just prior to piercing.
 - If surface anesthetic is used it must be applied using a disposable swab before the final use of the skin antiseptic.
- All non-disposable equipment must be cleaned and then disinfected following each piercing.
- Clean and disinfect work surfaces (e.g. tables, headrests, etc.) using an intermediate to high level disinfectant after each client. See **Disinfection of Instruments and Equipment** chart.
- **Clients must be given verbal and written aftercare instructions.** Include:
 - A reminder for hand hygiene prior to touching the piercing,
 - Normal bathing and showering is permitted but otherwise keep the pierced area dry
 - Allow access of the wound to air by using a loose covering
 - Avoid turning the jewelry when the wound is dry
 - Advice on how to deal with slight redness, pain or swelling
 - Expected healing time of the wound and possible complications and signs and symptoms
 - A recommendation to seek medical attention if the problem does not resolve within 24 hours
 - Advice to not remove jewelry from an infected piercing and to contact the piercer and seek medical attention.

Record Keeping

All records are to be kept onsite for one year and on file for five years.

- **Client records:** Include clients' full name, complete mailing address, telephone number and details of the procedure.
- Keep accidental blood exposure records on site for a minimum of one year and on file for a minimum of five years. Records must include the following information:
 - First and last name of person exposed
 - Address and phone number of person exposed
 - First and last name of personal service worker involved
 - Date of incident
 - Site of injury
 - Circumstances surrounding incident
 - How equipment was handled following incident

For more information please contact the Infectious Disease Control Team at
519-663-5317 ext. 2330 or go to www.healthunit.com

Source:

Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (2009). Infection prevention and control best practices for personal services settings. Retrieved from
http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/pubhealth/oph_standards/ophs/progstds/pdfs/pssp_2008.pdf

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