



Piercing Aftercare: Navel, Nipple and Surface

Draft. Not yet approved by the studio's qualified practitioner. Do not issue to clients.

Body piercings often heal slowly. A navel piercing commonly takes six to twelve months, and nipple piercings can take several months to a year. Surface piercings sit under a thin layer of skin and need extra patience. Your piercer will give you an estimate for your piercing.

Cleaning

- Wash your hands before you touch the piercing.
- Clean once or twice a day with sterile saline wound wash (0.9% sodium chloride) from a sealed can or sachet. Spray or soak, then gently rinse away any crust.
- Pat dry with clean disposable paper towel. Do not use a shared towel.
- Do not use alcohol, hydrogen peroxide, ointments or anything not recommended by your piercer.
- Showers are fine. Avoid baths, swimming pools, hot tubs, the sea and lakes while healing.

Reduce pressure and friction

- Wear loose, soft, breathable clothing over the area. Avoid tight waistbands, belts, bras, straps and rough fabric.
- Do not sleep on the piercing if you can help it. Sleeping on your back or side can help.
- Cover the piercing with a clean protective pad for sport, if your piercer advises it. Do not use plasters or dressings that trap moisture unless advised.
- Do not twist, turn or spin the jewellery. Do not pick at crusts.

Surface piercings

Surface piercings are more likely to move, grow out or be pushed out by the body. Watch for the skin over the bar becoming thin, shiny or tight, or the jewellery moving closer to the surface. If that happens, contact your piercer promptly. Do not leave it for weeks.

Downsizing

Initial jewellery is longer to allow for swelling. Book a downsize check when the swelling settles. Jewellery that stays too long catches on clothing and slows healing.

Pregnancy and breastfeeding

Your body changes during pregnancy. Tell your midwife or GP about any piercing. Navel and nipple jewellery may need to be changed or removed as your body changes. Talk to your piercer or your midwife or health visitor about nipple piercings and breastfeeding.



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Important: Signs that need medical advice: spreading redness, increasing pain or swelling, heat, thick yellow or green discharge, bleeding that will not stop, or feeling feverish or unwell. Contact your GP or NHS 111. Do not remove the jewellery for a suspected infection unless a clinician tells you to. Call 999 if you feel seriously ill.

What is normal

Swelling, tenderness, redness around the hole and a pale crust on the jewellery are normal in the early weeks. Healing can have good and bad days. Contact the studio if you are unsure.

Practitioner to confirm: the healing times quoted for each piercing the studio offers, the studio's advice on nipple piercings and breastfeeding, and whether pads or dressings are ever advised for sport.

Questions? Email thedesk@rebelliousink.tattoo. For anything medical, contact NHS 111 or your GP. In an emergency, call 999.