



Tongue Piercing

For your dental health.



An invasive surgical procedure

Body piercing is possibly the fastest growing form of self-expression today, and tongue and lip piercing seem to be among the most popular. But even though it's an invasive surgical process, many piercings are done at the spur of the moment, under conditions that are neither sterile nor safe. Piercing carries risks you should weigh carefully if you are considering having it done.

Piercing is such a deceptively easy process that hundreds of unregulated, unlicensed piercing studios have sprung up offering services virtually on demand. Anyone can pierce your body, from an assistant in a beauty parlor to a stranger in the back of a garage. It's highly likely that these people have had no training whatsoever when it comes to proper procedure or even basic sterilization or hygiene.

A high risk of blood borne illness

The most serious risk from oral piercing is contracting HIV, blood poisoning, or hepatitis C, B, D and G from non-sterilized, contaminated needles, equipment or jewelry. Moreover, there are few places on or in the body with a higher bacteria count than the inside of your mouth, so the possibility of contracting a serious local infection in your pierced tongue, lip or cheek is substantial.

Even after the piercing is done, you still face other risks:

- If the jewelry is not secure, you may swallow it, or, worse yet, inhale it.
- Your tongue may swell in reaction to the trauma of piercing, or from an allergic reaction to the jewelry itself, and may even block your airway.
- Swallowing, breathing and talking can all be seriously affected.
- You may bleed excessively.
- A nerve may be damaged.
- You may have chronic pain, or lose your sense of taste.
- You could bite down on the jewelry and chip or break a tooth.
- Finally, your gums may be damaged from abrasion.

The American Dental Association, the British Dental Association, the National Institute of Health and the National Hepatitis Foundation are among the many professional organizations that believe tongue piercing carries an unacceptable risk to your health. If you choose to accept the risk and go ahead with a piercing, don't do it on a whim. Think it over, ask questions about sterilization, procedures and the materials used. Inspect the facility in advance to ensure all instruments are fully and regularly sterilized in an autoclave, and that needles and corks are thrown away after each use. And come to see us soon after the piercing so we can check for signs of infection and tell you how to care for the wound as it heals, as well as how to minimize the damage the jewelry can cause to your teeth and gums.



Pierced tongue



Multiple piercings