

## Fact Sheet

# Ear Piercing

Services that break the skin, such as piercing and tattooing, are well-recognized risk factors for the transmission of blood-borne infections such as Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV. **Infection control precautions must be followed to protect both personal service workers and clients.**

*You do not have to see blood or body fluids on the instruments for an infection to occur. The following information is a supplement to the general operational requirements for personal service establishments.*

### Ear Piercing Equipment

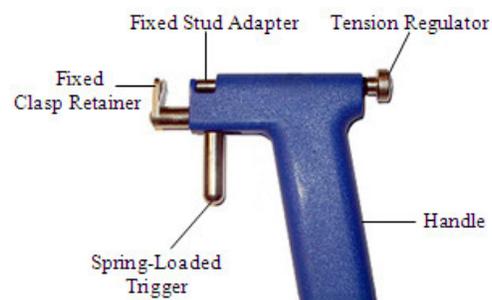
- Ear piercing equipment must not be used on any other part of the body except the ear lobes (fleshy part only), as the instrument can damage tissue and create a risk of infection
- If a needle or dermal punch method is used for piercing the ear lobe, [the requirements](#) of body piercing must be met.

### Old Ear Piercing Equipment

#### Cleaning and Sterilization:

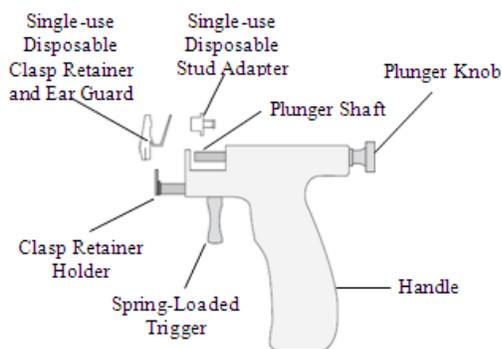
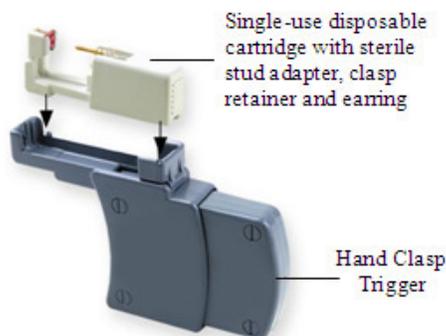
- For ear piercing instruments without sterile, single-use disposable adapters or cartridges (i.e. fixed stud adapter and clasp retainer):

*This area must be thoroughly **cleaned then sterilized** after each client.*



***If the old ear piercing equipment (pictured above) cannot be sterilized, it must not be used***

### New Ear Piercing Equipment



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### Jewellery



- Jewellery must be supplied pre-packaged and sterile.
- Under no circumstances can the jewellery be sampled or returned.
- Previously opened packages of jewellery can no longer be considered sterile.

### Infection Prevention and Control Requirements

#### **Steps to Piercing the Ear Lobe**

1. Obtain client information for record keeping purposes.
2. Practice hand hygiene before and after each client:
  - Clean hands with soap and water; or
  - Use hand sanitizer (60-90% alcohol) if your hands are **not** visibly dirty.
3. Check the client's skin to ensure it is free from cuts, wounds, rash or visible infections.
  - Do not provide service if there are visible skin conditions. Advise the client to seek medical attention.
  - Never offer to treat any skin conditions.
4. The ear piercer must wear single-use disposable gloves on both hands during the procedure.
  - Gloves must be changed between clients, and breaks in service (e.g. leaving the station) on the same client.
5. Clean the front and back of the ear lobe with an approved skin antiseptic.
6. Mark the ear lobe with an aseptic technique to prevent contamination of the marking pen.
  - If using a reusable pen, the ear must be cleaned as in step #5, marked and allowed to dry, then cleaned again.
7. Load the ear piercing instrument without touching either the sterile jewellery or the stud-holding sterile devices on the instrument.
8. Pierce the ear lobe with the sterile jewellery.
9. Discard all disposable parts (i.e. cartridges/adaptors and leftover jewellery in opened packages).
10. Remove gloves and practice hand hygiene.
11. Provide verbal and written after care instructions to the client including how to care for the piercing.
12. Clean and disinfect the ear piercing gun with an intermediate to high level disinfectant between clients.
13. Store the ear piercing equipment in a clean, covered container to prevent contamination and avoid touching the equipment unless hands are washed and single-use disposable gloves are worn.

#### **Cleaning and Disinfection**

- After each client, ear piercing instruments with sterile, single-use disposable parts, must be cleaned with soap and water, and then disinfected with an intermediate to high level disinfectant for the appropriate contact time (i.e. 70% isopropyl alcohol for 10 minutes).
- Store piercing instruments in a clean, covered, non-absorbent container when not in use.

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### **Record Keeping**

- The following records must be kept on site for a minimum of one year and on file for 5 years:
  - Accidental blood exposures
  - All jewellery and parts of ear piercing instruments purchased as pre-packaged and sterile.
  - Client record must include:
    - The date of the procedure; the client's full name, complete mailing address and telephone number; the full name of the person who performed the piercing; and details of the procedure that was carried out.
    - Location of piercing



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