

Skin Penetration - Fact Sheet

"NOSE PIERCING"

Introduction:

Nose piercing has specific equipment designed to carry out this procedure. A gun or needle can be used to pierce the nose, however it must not be a ear piercing gun. The operator carrying out the procedure must have adequate knowledge about piercing as well as knowledge in infection control techniques and minimum standards. The following recommendations are made to help achieve these standards.

Premises:

- All nose piercing premises must be registered with the local council. The register is to be made available for public viewing
- The premises must be in a clean and hygienic condition at all times
- A hand basin with hot and cold running water is required in the premises and is recommended to be in the treatment area
- Soap or other hand cleaning substance is required to be at the hand basin
- Paper towel or other single use hand drying equipment is required to be at the hand basin
- The construction of the premises should meet with local council requirements
- The finish on all surfaces within the piercing area should be made of materials that are easily cleaned
- Fittings in the piercing area such as benches should be cleaned between each client and/ or a clean covering placed over the treatment surface
- Adequate lighting is recommended

Personal Hygiene:

- Nose piercers must wash their hands before and after attending a client.
- A clean gown or apron must be worn during a nose piercing procedure
- If a nose piercer has a cut or open wound on their hands or fingers especially, they must cover it with a waterproof dressing
- When carrying out a piercing, single use gloves must be worn

Equipment:

- A specific nose piercing gun or a needle is to be used for a nose piercing
- The reusable nose piercing gun should not come in contact with the nose. Single use sterilised bags may be used to cover the gun while carrying out the piercing
- All equipment and/or jewellery used to penetrate the skin must be sterilised
- Most jewellery comes in pre-sterilised packaging. The jewellery should not be handled when loading it into the gun, or inserting it into the opening when using a needle
- Disposable cartridges which sit in the gun are used to hold the jewellery in place for the piercing

Procedures:

- Although not a legal requirement a person under the age of 18 years should not receive a nose piercing unless parental or guardian approval is provided
- Nose piercers should have adequate knowledge on how and where to pierce First aid knowledge is also recommended
- All necessary equipment should be set up just prior to start the procedure
- The skin to be pierced should be cleaned with a skin antiseptic
- Contact should not occur between the gun and the nose
- Sterile packaging should only be opened when ready to perform the piercing
- Jewellery is normally pre-sterilised, do not use jewellery that has been on display
- Contact with sterile jewellery should be avoided unless sterile gloves are worn. Single use gloves are not sterile unless specified

After Treatment:

- Single use gloves should be disposed of immediately after the procedure
- The nose piercing gun should be cleaned immediately after the procedure unless a sterilised bag has been used. Sterilised bags are single use and must be thrown out after each piercing
- Cartridges that hold the jewellery in place during a piercing are to be disposed immediately after each piercing
- All waste should be bagged appropriately and disposed daily
- After care instructions should be provided to the client on cleaning the site and jewellery, infections and what to look for, and healing times
- There should be no exchange of jewellery once inserted into an opening

If a needle is used for a nose piercing:

- Single use sharps must be disposed of into a sharps container
- Re-useable sharps must be sterilised before reuse
- Details of the sterilisation process must be recorded

For further information, or for other publications about skin penetration, contact your local council or public health unit.

For details on the legislative requirements for skin penetration procedures and best practice techniques refer to the 'Guidelines for Skin Penetration - 2001' and the 'Skin Penetration Code of Best Practice' respectively.

These publications are available from your local council, Public Health Units, the Better Health Centre on 9816 0452 or the NSW Health web site www.health.nsw.gov.au