



# Body Piercing - Code of Practice 7

## Purpose

The purpose of this code of practice (COP) is to support the policy decisions and conditions of licence adopted by the council in respect of special treatments establishments.

## Scope

This COP details specific requirements for cosmetic piercing in addition to those laid down in the regulations prescribing standard conditions applicable to all special treatment licensed premises.

## Age Restrictions

Body piercing is not permitted on persons under 16 years of age.

A parent or legal guardian must be present for persons over 16 and under 18 years of age and a written letter of consent must be obtained for the following permitted piercings.

Piercings permitted:

- Ear cartilage
- Eyebrow
- Navel
- Piercing to the nose septum excluding the cartilage

Piercings permitted on persons over the age of 16 without parental/guardian consent:

- Nose (not septum) and Ear Lobe

Clients must be over the age of 18 for the following permitted piercings:

- Lip (labret)
- Nipple
- Tongue

Piercings not permitted:

- Genitalia
- No surgical procedures such as branding, scarification and tongue splitting or removal of body parts.

Any person having a nipple piercing must be asked whether they wish to be accompanied by an adult of the same gender while the piercing is being carried out. This decision shall be recorded on the client's record and signed by the client.

## **Definitions**

### **Body piercing**

This shall include any form of treatment where the client's skin is broken and any article is inserted into the skin with the intention of leaving the article in the skin after treatment.

### **Cleaning**

This is a physical process which removes soil e.g. dust, dirt and organic matter, along with a large proportion of germs. Cleaning with hot water and detergent breaks up grease and dirt on floors and surfaces. Cleaning is also essential prior to disinfection and sterilisation of instruments and equipment.

### **Disinfection**

For the purposes of these treatments a high-level disinfectant relates to disinfectants capable of reducing the number of viable bacteria and blood borne viruses including Hepatitis B & C and HIV but which may not necessarily inactivate some viruses and bacterial spores. Where the disinfectant requires dilution, this must be carried out in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions using clean potable water. Once diluted the disinfectant must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Immersion must be in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

### **Sterilisation**

Refers to a treatment cycle that renders a piece of equipment free from viable micro-organisms, i.e. capable of killing bacteria, fungi, viruses and bacterial spores. Autoclave equipment must be electrically tested annually and certified proof provided that the autoclave meets sterilisation standards. In addition, regular spore testing and calibration of the autoclave equipment to be carried out to provide proof of its efficiency.

Where sterilisation is carried out, documented procedures shall be available for:

- The validation of the sterilisation process. Wrapped or hollow items must be sterilised in a vacuum steam steriliser.

- The method of inspection of packing and seals, copies of steriliser maintenance details and verification records.
- The storage facilities and practices for sterile packs.

## Ultrasonication

This is an effective cleaning method with minimal handling of contaminated equipment. This cleaning attacks every surface, including apertures and recesses. Cleaning agents are added to the bath. Some cleaning agents are also disinfectants which will reduce the bacterial load. Ultrasonic baths should be used, maintained and validated according to the manufacturer's instructions.

## Client consultation

A full client consultation must be carried out at the time of a first visit. This includes the following:

- medical history
- eczema
- psoriasis
- haemophilia
- heat disorders/disease
- blood thinning agents
- high/low blood pressure
- Medication
- Client not under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- pregnancy
- breast feeding
- epilepsy
- diabetes
- allergies
- contraindications noted
- area to be treated
- treatment plan
- date of birth of client
- date of treatment;
- name of body piercer
- Type of jewellery to be used

This record should be signed by the client as a declaration of agreement to treatment having understood all the associated risks. Secondary infection can occur if piercings are not kept scrupulously clean and there are risks associated with some piercings. Cartilage areas of the ear may have

prolonged healing times and more liable to infections or complications. A record of subsequent treatments must be kept. Consultation records must be held at the premises and be available for inspection by an authorised officer; copies of aftercare advice must be available for inspection.

## Staff health and infection control

- All staff must be vaccinated against Hepatitis B.
- All staff undertaking piercing shall wear disposable single use examination style CE approved gloves.
- All staff to wear disposable aprons and face and eye protection where required.
- Treatment areas shall be marked with non-toxic single use marker or single use stylus and non-toxic ink.
- Any reusable tools or equipment must be pre-sterilised, and seal wrapped until used. Wherever possible this equipment should be single use.
- Single use paper towel or impervious barrier film shall be placed on the couch, equipment liable to contamination and working surfaces in the treatment room.
- Body piercing must not be carried out on or within 10cms of an infected area of skin, a rash, cut or other wound.
- The client's skin must be cleaned prior to piercing using a solution containing alcohol or appropriate sanitising skin wipes.
- The layout of any decontamination area shall flow along a defined process from dirty (i.e. used and contaminated), through to clean.
- If manual washing is carried out this shall take place in a dedicated, deep sink, located in a dirty area.
- Sinks to have waterproof splashbacks.
- Sharps boxes with an orange lid must comply with UN 3291 and BS7320 standards. Proof of contract must be provided.
- Contaminated waste to be placed directly in yellow bag (if 7kg or more) immediately after use. Proof of clinical waste contract to be provided.

## Jewellery

Body piercing jewellery shall be pre-sterilised and kept sterile until used. Any jewellery must be of high quality, hypoallergenic and free of nickel and other toxic metals including silver. Any gold jewellery used must be solid 14ct or 18ct gold.

## **Standard infection control procedures**

### **Blood spillage**

Where any blood spillage occurs, it shall be cleaned up as soon as possible using the procedure stated below:

- put on disposable gloves and apron
- place disposable paper towels on blood spillage
- pour bleach on top of paper towels and leave for two minutes
- use paper towels to mop up spillage and then place them into clinical waste yellow bags
- discard gloves into yellow plastic bag
- wash and dry hands thoroughly
- any contaminated clothes should be handled as little as possible and then only with gloves on.
- they should be pre-washed then washed on a hot cycle 64 Celsius for 15 minutes or 70C for minimum of three minutes or discarded as clinical waste

This procedure must be documented and made available for all staff in the case of such an event.

### **Sharps Injury**

The licensee shall provide a written needle stick injury procedure. The procedure shall include the following

- what action to take in the event of such an injury
- encourage bleeding by squeezing gently
- do not suck wounds
- wash well with soap and warm running water
- cover with a dry dressing
- seek medical advice as soon as possible at the local Accident and Emergency Department

- recording of any puncture wound or contamination of broken skin, mouth or eyes and report the incident to the employer where necessary
- if an infection occurs as a result of the incident, it should be reported to the local authority by telephone

## Training

Each person carrying out body piercing must provide a certificate stating that they have attended and obtained knowledge in first aid and certified training in hygiene and infection control to Level 2 standard.

Apprentices shall have received training for up to one year under the guidance of an experienced cosmetic piercer. They must be able to demonstrate a thorough knowledge of sterile procedures and an understanding of the route of disease transmission and how to prevent cross-contamination. They must be conversant of all contraindications of illness that may affect piercing or may have been caused by piercing and procedures to deal with emergency bleeding. References must be provided from previous employment and verified as genuine by the licence holder.

The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) in conjunction with Public Health England (PHE) and the Tattoo and Piercing Industry Union have issued a Toolkit detailing safe practice with regard to hygienically undertaking tattooing and skin piercing. It is expected that the practitioners adhere to the requirements and recommendations contained within this document.

The document is freely available on the internet entitled Tattooing and Body Piercing Guidance Toolkit <https://www.cieh.org/media/2004/tattooing-and-body-piercing-guidance-toolkit-july-2013.pdf>

## Review

This Code of Practice may be reviewed regularly and updated in light of current industry guidance and legal opinion. Any changes will be notified to licensees and will be attached as conditions to your licence with effect from the date of the next renewal of your licence.

### Further information

The following London Borough of Redbridge Guidance Notes should be consulted in conjunction with this code of practice.

- [GN1 - Guidance notes on hand washing](#)
- [GN2 - Guidance notes on decontamination](#)



- [GN3 – Guidance notes on anaesthetics](#)
- [GN4 – Guidance notes on sharps injuries](#)
- [GN5 – Guidance notes on the use of bench-top steam sterilisers](#)