



Crown Ink Studio

TATTOO . PIERCING . CROWN HEIGHTS, BROOKLYN



PIERCING AFTERCARE . ORAL

Caring for Your Oral Piercing

Tongue, lip, labret and cheek — keeping the inside and outside clean, bringing swelling down, and protecting your teeth.



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Piercing Aftercare . Oral

559 Nostrand Ave, Crown Heights, Brooklyn, NY

(347) 750-5751 . crowninkstudio.co

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Caring for Your Oral Piercing

Tongue, lip, labret and cheek piercings heal in a busy environment — here's how to keep the inside and outside of the piercing clean, bring the swelling down, and protect your teeth.

01 Rinsing inside the mouth

- Rinse for 30–60 seconds after every meal and at bedtime (4–5 times a day) for the whole healing period, with **one** of these: an alcohol-free antimicrobial or antibacterial mouth rinse; plain clean water; or a packaged sterile saline with no additives.
- Don't over-rinse or use a strong mix — too much, too often, or too salty causes discoloration and irritation of the mouth and piercing.
- If you have high blood pressure or a heart condition, check with your doctor before using a saline product as your main rinse.

02 Cleaning the outside (lip, labret and cheek)

- **Wash your hands** before touching the piercing for any reason.
- **Saline:** hold clean gauze soaked in sterile saline against the outside of the piercing for a few minutes, once or more a day. Rinse briefly with clean water afterward.
- **Soap (optional):** once a day in the shower, lather a pearl-sized drop of mild fragrance-free soap, clean the jewelry and skin around it, and **rinse every trace away**. Don't rotate the jewelry through the piercing.
- **Dry** by gently patting with clean, disposable paper towel — not cloth.

03 What's normal

- **Days 1–5:** noticeable swelling, light bleeding, bruising and tenderness.
 - **After that:** some swelling and a light whitish-yellow fluid (not pus).
 - A piercing can feel healed before it is — it heals from the outside in, and the inside stays fragile for the whole healing period. Keep cleaning; be patient.
 - A healed oral piercing can shrink or close in minutes without jewelry. If you love it, keep quality jewelry in.
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04 Bringing the swelling down

- Let small pieces of ice dissolve in your mouth during the first few days.
 - An over-the-counter anti-inflammatory such as ibuprofen or naproxen, taken as directed on the package, can help.
 - Don't talk or play with the jewelry more than you need to.
 - Sleep with your head raised above your heart for the first few nights.
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05 Keeping your mouth healthy

- Start a **new soft-bristled toothbrush** and keep it in a clean place, away from other brushes.
 - Brush your teeth and rinse (saline, water or your chosen mouth rinse) after every meal.
 - Floss daily, and brush gently around the jewelry. Once healed, brush the jewelry itself so plaque doesn't build up on it.
 - Sleep, good food and less stress all speed up healing — stress alone can slow wound healing by up to 40%.
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06 Eating

- Take small bites and place food directly onto your back teeth.
- Skip spicy, salty, acidic and very hot food and drinks for a few days.
- Cold food and drinks are soothing and help with swelling.
- Soft, sticky foods like mashed potatoes and oatmeal are surprisingly hard to eat — they cling to the jewelry.
- **Tongue:** keep your tongue level as you eat so the jewelry doesn't get caught between your teeth when it turns.
- **Lip, labret and cheek:** be careful opening wide — the jewelry can catch on your teeth.

07 Jewelry

- **Downsize once the swelling is gone.** The first post is longer to allow for swelling; leaving it in long-term can damage teeth and gums. Ask us about our downsizing policy — this change should be done by a piercer.
- Check threaded ends regularly with clean hands ("righty-tighty, lefty-loosey"), and carry a clean spare ball in case one is lost.
- Need a non-metal alternative (for a dental or medical procedure)? Ask us — don't leave the piercing empty.
- Done with the piercing? Remove the jewelry (or let us) and keep cleaning until it closes. Usually only a small mark remains.
- If an infection is suspected, **leave quality jewelry in** so it can drain — removing it can trap the infection and cause an abscess. Come see us or a doctor first.

08 What to avoid

- **Playing with the jewelry.** Clicking it against your teeth or rubbing it on your gums can permanently damage teeth, gums and other oral structures.
- Excessive talking or movement during healing — it causes scar tissue and migration.
- Mouthwash with alcohol — it irritates the piercing and delays healing.
- Oral sexual contact, including open-mouth kissing, while healing — even with a long-term partner.
- Chewing tobacco, gum, fingernails, pencils, sunglasses or anything else that can carry bacteria into your mouth.
- Sharing plates, cups and utensils.
- Smoking — it raises every risk and lengthens healing. Also avoid recreational drugs, and go easy on aspirin, alcohol and caffeine while you're still bleeding or swollen.
- Lakes, pools, hot tubs and other bodies of water while healing.

Questions? Call us — not your friends.

Crown Ink Studio . 559 Nostrand Ave, Crown Heights, Brooklyn . **(347) 750-5751** .

Instagram @ana_piercer559

Every body is different and healing times vary. These guidelines are consistent with the recommendations of the Association of Professional Piercers (safepiercing.org). They are general care information, not medical advice — see a physician or dentist for any medical concern.

