

## **BODY PIERCING I**

### **Inner Steel Basic Body Piercing Course**

#### **Everything You Need to Know About Body Piercing**

*Prepared and convened by Glamuzina Corporation Ltd with piercing expertise provided by David van der Camp of Inner Steel and medical support by Dr Anna Twigg.*

## **JEWELLERY AND APPROPRIATE JEWELLERY SELECTION**

The quality of jewellery used in the piercing process and after healing should never be compromised. If you are being pierced, demand jewellery that is appropriately sized, safe in constitution, design and construction, and which will best promote healing.

Gold plated, gold filled and sterling silver are never appropriate for new or unhealed piercings.

## **MATERIALS**

### **Surgical Stainless Steel**

There are three surgical stainless steels used to make body piercing jewellery.

**316LVM** is low in carbon (L) and vacuum melted (VM), ensuring no reaction with body tissue, and is pure, pliable and easy to work with.

**316L** is the minimum industry standard.

**Surgical Implantation** stainless steel has beautiful lustre from electro-polishing techniques. The stainless balls are drilled and not dimpled, maintaining a better spherical appearance. The rings are not as pliable as the 316LVM rings. Levels of Carbon, Nickel, Molybdenum and Copper are low enough to offer the same hypoallergenic properties as inert metals like Titanium and Niobium, while retaining the advantageous properties of an alloy.

**316LVM** and L and Composition D stainless steel contain Nickel to enhance the positive qualities of the alloy. Nickel offers corrosion resistance and attractive presentation.

**316L** stainless steel does not release nickel in quantities that can cause allergies.

### **Niobium**

Niobium is a pure element, mined in Australia, Zaire, Brazil, Russia, Norway, Nigeria, Canada and Madagascar with an annual global production of 15,000 tonnes. Niobium exists in the average 70kg person at 1.5mg in blood, bone, liver and muscle. It is used in industrial and surgical applications and was extensively used in the Gemini space project.

Niobium has become popular for body piercing, showing no adverse reactions. It is coloured by creating a thin oxide surface layer from an anodised electrolyte process. The metal doesn't change colour, but an interference layer is created, reflecting and refracting light to give the illusion of colour (like oil on a wet road). Black is heat-treated and will not fade like the standard colour range which wears over three to six months, depending on the piercing.

### **Titanium**

While 60 times more prevalent than copper and 100 times more prevalent than tungsten, it takes 16 times more energy to produce one tonne of metal than steel, making it much more expensive to buy.

Titanium jewellery is made from Ti 6AL 4V Eli alloy (90% Titanium, 6% Aluminium, 4% Vanadium). Half of the world's Titanium consumption is this grade with the Aerospace industry accounting for 80 per cent usage. Medical prosthesis accounts for 3 per cent.

The Eli grade has a unique microstructure with high damage tolerance. Colours are available via the same oxidising process as Niobium.

Titanium oxidises to a gunmetal colour in its raw state which can be overcome with a clear coat, giving Titanium a similar appearance to stainless steel.

### **PMMA, PTFE, Bioplast & Bioflex**

Polymethylmethacrylate (PMMA) and Polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE) are inert biomaterial with slightly porous surfaces which require regular cleaning. PTFE is flexible and lightweight and is used for a range of 14 gauge barbells in white and black.

Bioplast is an extremely flexible biocompatible material that can be cut to any length and threaded by a metal ball. It causes less swelling in new piercings, has a lower infection rate and faster healing time. It eliminates the risk of allergic reaction as it doesn't contain nickel.

Bioflex is a new, ingenious and cost effective product with similar attributes to Bioplast.

## **THE FINISH**

### **Polish**

A highly polished finish looks attractive and protects piercing jewellery against being porous and harbouring bacteria. Nicks, scratches and blemishes in the steel can make a piercing painful and difficult to heal.

Every surface of a ring should be polished. To view the inside, it must be held at an appropriate angle in the right light.

## Ring Ends

It is important for a captive bead ring/ball closure ring to be round so it poses no threat to body tissue on entering a piercing, will fit snugly into the back of a piercing needle or cannular, and allows easy placing and removal of beads.

## Beads

The standard bead is Hematite for Titanium and Niobium. The stainless steel bead is 316L grade and used on all stainless rings.

## Threaded Jewellery

On 14 gauge piercing jewellery, both balls are removable, allowing flexibility for accessorising. The threads are recessed to allow easier insertion into a piercing needle or cannular, ensuring a trauma free piercing procedure. Internal threads are used on heavy gauge jewellery (8g and above).

CONVERSION TABLE INCH FRACTIONS TO MILLIMETERS	
1/4"	6.35mm
5/16"	7.94
3/8"	9.53
7/16"	11.11
1/2"	12.70
9/16"	14.29
5/8"	15.88
11/16"	17.46
3/4"	19.05
13/16"	20.64
7/8"	22.23
15/16"	23.81
1"	25.40
1 1/16"	26.92
1 1/8"	28.58
1 3/16"	30.16
1 1/4"	31.75
1 5/16"	33.34
1 3/8"	34.93
1 7/16"	36.51
1 1/2"	38.10
1 5/8"	41.28
1 3/4"	44.45

  

BROWN & SHARPE GAUGES TO SCALE - DIAMETERS LISTED		
<b>20 ga</b> 0.032" 0.813mm	<b>18 ga</b> 0.040" 1.024mm	<b>16 ga</b> 0.051" 1.290mm
<b>14 ga</b> 0.064" 1.629mm	<b>12 ga</b> 0.081" 2.052mm	<b>10 ga</b> 0.102" 2.588mm
<b>8 ga</b> 0.128" 3.264mm	<b>6 ga</b> 0.162" 4.111mm	<b>4 ga</b> 0.204" 5.189mm
<b>2 ga</b> 0.257" 6.543mm	<b>0 ga</b> 0.324" 8.230mm	<b>00 ga</b> .364" 9.246mm

## **PIERCING ROOM EQUIPMENT**

### **Furnishings**

A Barber Chair is excellent for upper body piercing, but arms may get in the way of piercings below the waist.

Doctor's Exam Tables and Massage Tables offer good adjustability.

A Basic Armless Chair is usually necessary for the piercer to mark the piercee.

### **Lighting**

Lamps are ideal for working in localised areas.

### **Rubbish Bin**

The rubbish bin should be pedal operated and marked as bio-hazard. Use plastic liners and never dispose of needles in the bin.

### **Mirror**

It is ideal to have a full-length mirror with a hand-held mirror for facial piercings.

### **Shelves**

Have three sets of shelves – one for personal belongings and one for contaminated tools and a sharps container for used needles (both away from the piercing area). The third set can be used for piercing instruments and is ideally stainless steel. Store ancillary supplies below.

## **STERILISATION EQUIPMENT**

### **Autoclave**

An autoclave is essential for your piercing business unless you have an efficient and cost effective arrangement with a local health care professional.

### **Ultrasonic Cleaner**

An ultrasonic cleaner thoroughly cleans components quickly, without extra manual work and without damaging the items which are being cleaned. It removes the most stubborn dirt from inside drillings and cavities in seconds.

### **Implement Trays**

Two trays are necessary - one to collect the contaminated equipment and the other for equipment to be disinfected with hard surface cleaner.

### **Sharps Container**

Have a plastic container for the collection of needles and syringes.

### **Dial Calipers / Brass Sliding Gauge / Micrometer**

Used for highly precise measurements of jewellery and piercing placements. Plastic calipers cannot be autoclaved but are non porous and can be cleaned with hard surface cleaner or bleach. The metal version is more accurate and considerably more expensive. Brass sliding gauges are small and autoclavable but not as accurate.

### **Ring Opening / Closing Pliers**

Circlip pliers are ideal. The ring opening pliers expand as the grip is drawn (the opposite of conventional pliers). The CBR/BCR ball can be removed allowing insertion. Ring closing pliers have a rolled jaw and, used in conjunction with surgical tape, will close the ring on the ball.

### **Forceps (Pennington/Oval Tooth/ Long Jaw)**

Pennington are the general use clamp and have a triangular opening at the end of the jaws up to 12mm. They are used for lip, lobe and nipple piercings, as well as some genital piercings.

Oval tooth clamps (similar to sponge clamps) and Long Jaw (bent hinged) are used for tongue (with larger serrations). All three clamps come as slotted versions for fast removal.

## **CONSUMABLES**

### **Needles (Optiva 14/16/18G Catheter)**

A J&J medical supply product available in sterile packs.

### **Needles (Blades 6/8/10/12/14/16/18G)**

Pre-sterilised blades with the hub removed.

### **Sterilisation (Bags / Tubing)**

Both products have indicators which show completion of sterilisation in the autoclave. Bags are ideal for larger instruments, like forceps. Tubing is more efficient for smaller items.

### **Autoclave Tape**

Used in conjunction with bags, the adhesive tolerates heat and moisture and has a sterilisation indicator.

### **Disposable Gloves**

Always wear a fresh pair of gloves before handling anything that has been sterilised or disinfected. Change the gloves often if necessary.

### **Examination Table Paper**

Available by the roll and changed between clients.

### **Tissues**

Used for many applications, including tongue piercing "drool" and to remove ink marking a piercing (dipped in alcohol solution).

### **Dental Bibs**

Paper one side and plastic the other, they are a barrier to liquids and make excellent liners for implement trays.

### **Wound Dressing Packs**

Perfect for storing small quantities of essential items, including ink for marking piercings, alcohol solution, Benzalkonium chloride, mouthwash (for tongue piercings). Sterile tissue mat, gauze and three pairs of sterile tweezers are standard.

### **Corks**

Can be autoclaved in batches and stored. They can provide solid support for the tissue and act as a receptacle for the needle once it has passed through the tissue when performing a clamped piercing.

### **Rubber Bands**

Rubber bands are used to adjust the forceps grip. Sterilise them by soaking them in an alcohol solution for 5-10 minutes and store in a sterile jar. Discard after each piercing.

### **Cotton Buds**

Ideal for cleaning in tight areas (like nostrils) after a bleed. Can also be used in the marking process.

### **Gauze Pads**

Used to dry tongues before a piercing and for protection of new piercings.

### **Surgical Tape**

Used with gauze pads and on the surface of pliers to protect the jewellery finish.

### **Bleach / Disinfectants**

Janola and other household bleaches are fine. A mix of 10:1 water to bleach is an effective hard surface cleaner. Make enough for several days and store in an airtight container. Discard after use and never pour back into the original container to prevent contamination.

### **Alcohol / Chlorohexidine / Cetrimide**

Specifically used for cleaning instruments which come into contact with unbroken skin.

### **Aidal Plus**

The best intermediate level cleaner.

**Iodine Swabs (Betadine)**

Used for cleaning the skin before piercing. A small percentage of people may have an allergy (they are usually allergic to shellfish).

**Marking Pen**

Studex marking pens have a particularly fine point. They are alcohol based to provide a level of sterility when used with a Betadine swab on unbroken skin.

*More advanced piercings require some other items.*