

Ear Piercing with Hand-Held Devices

Earlobe piercing involves piercing the fleshy part of the ear (i.e., the earlobe) with the aid of a piercing needle or hand-held piercing device. When an ear piercing device is used, an earring stud is used to pierce the client's earlobe, in contrast to other types of body piercing which are performed with the aid of a piercing needle.

Infection Risks

Microorganisms can be introduced at the piercing site and cause an infection. The result may be localized skin or tissue infections or more serious invasive infections.

Potential sources of these microorganisms include:

- Contaminated or improperly reprocessed equipment
- Ear piercing devices used on parts of the body other than the ear lobes
- The client's own bacteria on the skin
- Unclean hands touching the treated area.

Additional Considerations

Equipment:

- Ear piercing devices are only permitted to be used on ear lobes and are not to be used on other parts of the body, including on other parts of the ear.
- Ear piercing devices that do not have sterile, single-use disposable plastic cartridges or adaptors (i.e., those that directly contact a client's ear) are not recommended.
- Ear piercing devices that cannot be immersed in liquid can be cleaned and disinfected via other methods (e.g., by wiping). If wipes are used for cleaning and disinfection, consideration is to be given to choosing a 1-step cleaner/disinfectant product and ensuring that the contact time and intended use of the product are appropriate for use on the ear piercing device.
- Ear piercing devices that cannot be disinfected or sterilized are not to be used.
- All sterile items (i.e., piercing cartridges, stud adaptors, clasp retainers, piercing jewellery) are to be maintained as sterile until the point of use.
- Open, unused items provided as sterile are not to be used once packaging is opened (i.e., if a single earring of a pair is used, the second earring is to be given to the client or discarded, and is not to be reused).

Client Safety:

- Before performing a piercing, operators are to apply skin antiseptic to the client's skin.
- If the piercing site is to be marked, operators are to allow the antiseptic to dry, mark the client's skin with a single-use marker or toothpick, allow the marking agent to dry, and then re-

apply skin antiseptic. Antiseptic and marking agents are to be single-use and dispensed aseptically.

- Clients are to be provided with verbal and written aftercare information following the piercing, including a recommendation to see a family doctor within 24 hours if any signs of infection develop.

Reprocessing Classification

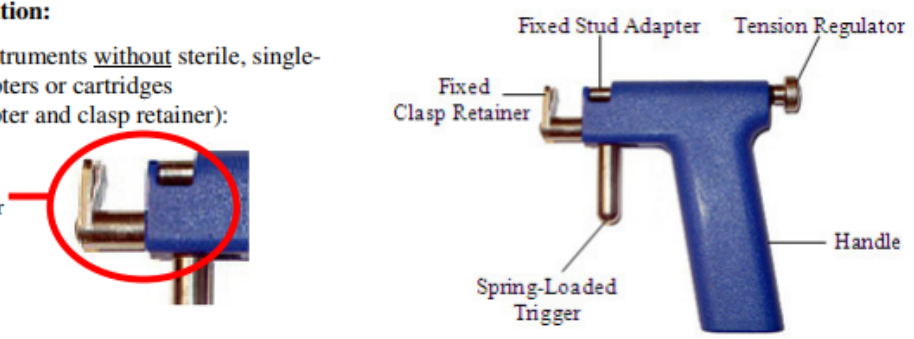
Critical <i>Sterilization</i>	Non-critical <i>Intermediate Level Disinfection</i>	Non-critical <i>Low-Level Disinfection</i>	Various classifications <i>Single-Use, Disposable</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ear piercing devices that come into direct contact with a client's ear (not recommended) • Jewellery used for initial piercing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ear piercing devices used to hold single-use, sterile disposable cartridges or stud adaptors and clasp retainers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tables, chairs, beds • Rigid containers used to hold dirty equipment until reprocessing (at end of day) • Service trays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cartridges* • Marking pen or toothpick • Opened piercing jewellery • Opened unpackaged jewellery* • Gloves • Single-use stud holder* • Single-use clasp retainer* • Swab used to apply skin antiseptic

*These items are to be sterile prior to use (packaged sterile or sterilized on-site)

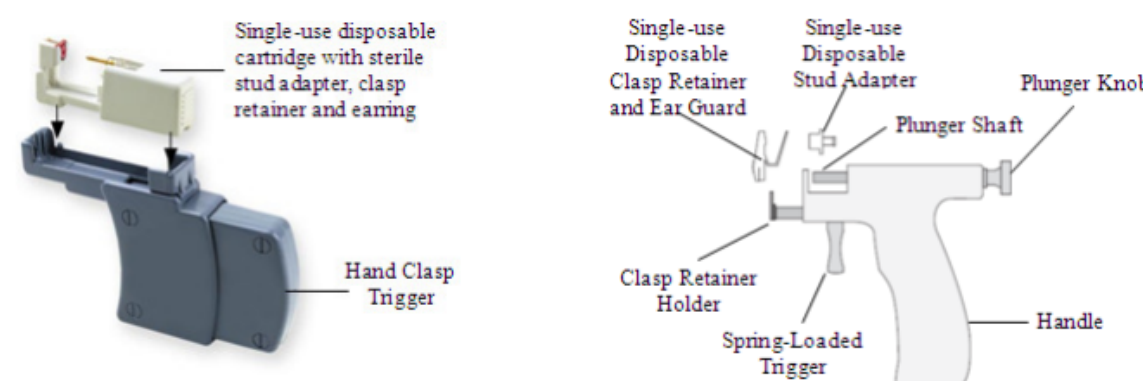
OLD EAR PIERCING EQUIPMENT

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.



NEW EAR PIERCING EQUIPMENT



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

This fact sheet is based on PSS best practice recommendations, current reprocessing standards and legislation. It is not an inclusive list of all requirements. Operators are responsible to ensure that all services are offered according to local requirements, best practices and legislation.