

EAR PIERCING GUIDANCE

These notes must be read in conjunction with the general information on skin piercing and the bylaws on this subject.

METHODS OF EAR PIERCING

Gun method

This is the latest modified version of the gun method, and has as far as possible eliminated sources of infection. The stud and butterfly are both mounted on plastic blocks or capsules, which are pre-sterilized. The purpose of the blocks is to screen the gun from contamination during the piercing operation. After piercing, the blocks or capsules are discarded. The manufacturers of this recommended method of ear piercing include Inverness, Caflon, Caress and Trips.

Coren method

A variation on the gun method is manufactured by Coren and consists of a U-shaped plastic holder on which both the stud and butterfly are mounted. After piercing, the plastic holder is discarded. As no component of this ear piercing method is re-used, infection from one person to another is eliminated; therefore this method is also acceptable.

Gun method 2

The original gun method adopted the principle of the stud acting as the piercing agent. The pre-sterilized stud and butterfly are mounted onto the gun, and the stud is mechanically pushed through the lobe into the butterfly. Infection from contaminated needles is therefore avoided. However, as the lobe touches part of the gun during the piercing it is possible for the gun to be contaminated by serum. The guns cannot be heat sterilized, therefore infection from this source is possible.

This original version of the gun method is unacceptable for use.

Simplicity method

This method uses a stainless steel instrument incorporating a needle. Contamination of the instrument and needle during the piercing operation is inevitable. As efficient sterilization of the equipment is difficult to achieve, **this method should not be used.**

POINTS TO NOTE

- The area of skin to be pierced, i.e. the earlobe or auricle, should be wiped over with an alcohol-impregnated swab or with iodine-alcohol solution to disinfect the skin prior to needle insertion.

- Once the pre-sterilized studs have been opened contamination is possible. Therefore, in instances where the client requires one ear only to be pierced, the spare stud should not be kept to be used for another customer.
- Customers should be given adequate aftercare advice. Manufacturers of the guns will normally provide a printed advice sheet.

For further information please contact:

Licensing Department
Wyre Council
Civic Centre
Breck Road
Poulton le Fylde
FY6 7PU
Tel: 01253 891000 or
Email: licensing@wyre.gov.uk