

Oral Piercing

Piercing the tongue

Many people want to get their tongue or lips pierced. This is not the same as getting your ears pierced. Unlike your ear lobe, your tongue is a muscle that has many blood vessels and nerves.

What to expect

First, a cork is placed underneath your tongue. Then, a long needle is punched through the sensitive tissue. A barbell is inserted into the hole in your tongue.

All of this is done without anesthesia.

Soon after the barbell is inserted, your tongue will swell. The swelling is significant and usually lasts three to five days.

Because your tongue is covered with bacteria, they can invade the open wound and enter your bloodstream. This can result in painful infections that ooze pus into your mouth and throat.

If this happens, you need to get immediate medical attention.

The needle used to pierce the tongue is quite thick. If it hits one of the many veins in your tongue, you can expect to have heavy bleeding.

The needle can also sever a nerve in the tongue, which can result in permanent numbness.



Exposed tooth roots



Piercing the tongue

Problems with jewelry

The jewelry itself can present problems. The hard metal ball is constantly hitting the fragile tooth structure, much like a wrecking ball.

People with tongue studs tend to habitually bite them, which increases the chance of chipping or scratching a tooth.

Lip rings can also wear away the gums. This can lead to gingivitis and expose the tooth roots, which can make your teeth sensitive to hot, cold and sweet foods.

Take precautions

We do not advocate it, but if you must get an oral piercing, take some precautions.

- ❖ Make sure the shop is clean.
- ❖ The piercer should be properly trained, follow OSHA guidelines for bloodborne pathogens, and use only sterilized needles and equipment.
- ❖ The piercer should thoroughly explain the procedure and your follow-up care.
- ❖ Use a new toothbrush when you return home.

Oral piercings are a trend that can cause severe damage. Because our goal is to keep your teeth and gums healthy, we do not recommend this fashion statement.