

Oral Piercing

Oral piercings are a growing trend. Intra-orally, piercings can most commonly be seen on the tongue, lips or cheeks. The piercings are placed by trained professionals in areas where anatomy allows. The site of a piercing has to be in an area where there are no major nerves or blood vessels.

Effects on Oral Health

- Harbours bacteria
- Causes recession from repetitive habits of playing with piercing or putting strain on gums
- Piercings rubbing against skin or gingiva naturally can also cause receding gums or irritation
- Chipped/cracked teeth
- Can cause swelling and bleeding
- Susceptible to bacterial, viral or fungal infections
- Problems swallowing, choking sensation, airway blockage
- Swallowing or choking on jewelry that gets dislodged from site
- Nerve Damage
- Alteration of taste buds
- Bad breath
- Increased salivary flow
- Formation of bacteria plaque or calculus on piercing

Dental Care of Oral Piercings

See your dental professionals often to document any changes or harmful effects the piercing may be having on the oral cavity. You may be asked to take the piercing out for radiographs and local anesthesia, otherwise treatment proceeds as usual. Your general dentist can usually treat chipped or cracked teeth. If severe gum issues occur, a referral to a gum specialist called a periodontist may be needed.

There are a few easy things you can do to minimize the impact of the piercing on your oral health. For example, it is a good idea to attach a plastic ball to the end of piercing located intra orally, instead of a sharp edge. Also, check sterilization and health and safety protocols of the jewelry you will be placing in the piercing, to make sure it is of a high quality material. Lastly, avoid getting in the habit of sucking or biting on the piercing – these habits can cause a lot of damage.

Caring for your Piercing

The piercing will take about 6 weeks to heal. Make sure your hands are clean before touching your piercing. Change your tooth brush regularly and brush your teeth tongue and jewelry gently after each meal. Clean the site with an anti bacterial mouth rinse after each meal. Remove the jewelry often for a good clean. Taking the piercing out when eating, sleeping and during contact sports is recommended.

Alternatives to Piercing

Dental diamonds are a great alternative to accessorize your mouth. These are small diamonds that can be cemented onto the tooth by your dentist and be removed as desired. Be aware that if any enamel on the tooth is shaved, a small composite (white) filling is often placed once the diamond is removed.

Lip Tattoos

Lip tattoos are increasing in popularity. After researching what dermatologists and physicians have to say about lip tattoos, our professional opinion at Banff Dental care is to avoid any potentially harmful effects tattooing can have intra orally. It is an area that can become easily infected. The human mouth has many different types of harmful bacteria that can introduced into the blood stream during the tattoo process. In addition, the tattoo process normally has to be repeated periodically due to the fast turnover of cells inside the mouth, introducing a chance for infection over and over again.

