HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR COSMETIC PIERCERS

Hygiene procedures should be followed as per tattooing.

Novice piercers should have shadowed an experienced piercer and performed piercings under supervision.

Where possible piercers should have proof of qualifications and these should be displayed on the premises.

The operator must be able to show knowledge of possible contra-indications and shall discuss the client’s medical history with them accordingly to include the following prior to piercing.

- Heart Disease
- Cellulitis
- Eczema
- Impetigo
- Genital Warts (if relevant)
- Allergic responses (anaesthetics, plasters, jewellery metals, i.e. nickel)
- Haemorrhaging
- Fainting
- Seizures, i.e. epilepsy
- Diabetes
- HIV Infection etc.
- Hepatitis

Where these conditions exist or there is past history, written authorisation from their GP is required.

There should be a notice prominently displayed informing clients of the possible risks including:

- Blood poisoning
- Localised severe swelling and trauma around the piercing site
- Scarring
- Jewellery embedding
- Localised infections
- Allergic reactions

You must keep an adequate first aid kit on the premises and you should have a qualification in basic first aid.

It is recommended that cosmetic piercers are vaccinated for the Hepatitis B virus.

The administration of local anaesthetic injections by body piercers is an offence. Ethyl Chloride must be used with extreme caution.

The operator and the client shall not be under the influence of alcohol, drugs or other substances.
Needles must be pre-packed and pre-sterilized and used once only. Hollow needles should have a minimum of 1.55mm diameter.

Needles should be disposed of in a proper "sharps" box and should be taken to an approved outlet i.e. a local hospital.

Jewellery should be of suitable grade surgical steel or high carat gold and must be kept sterile until inserted.

Ear piercing guns must not be used for any other parts of the body. “Butterfly clips” must not be placed on the back of a nose piercing.

Surgical spirit must not be used on a nose piercing.

Customers must be given verbal and written information regarding cosmetic piercing aftercare.

This should include:

Normal bathing and showering permitted otherwise keep dry
Clean hands before touching jewellery
Turn jewellery when wound is not dry
Do not cover wound closely to permit access to air
Expected healing times of wound
Possible indication of complications
Advice on how to deal with redness/swelling/pain also recommendation to consult GP if the problem does not improve within 24 hours

You should keep adequate records of every customer and the type of piercing. As a minimum you should record the name and the address of the customer.

A diary or day book will suffice but it is advisable to use record cards.