



## Follow-up Care

### During the first six weeks

Try not to talk too much for a few days after piercing.

Sucking on ice chips may help reduce swelling.

Carefully brush with a new, soft-bristled toothbrush and rinse with warm salt water, or an alcohol-free, antibacterial mouthwash.

Avoid smoking, alcoholic beverages and spicy foods.

Eating soft foods for the first couple of days may help with healing.

See a dentist or doctor if you get an infection.

## After Care

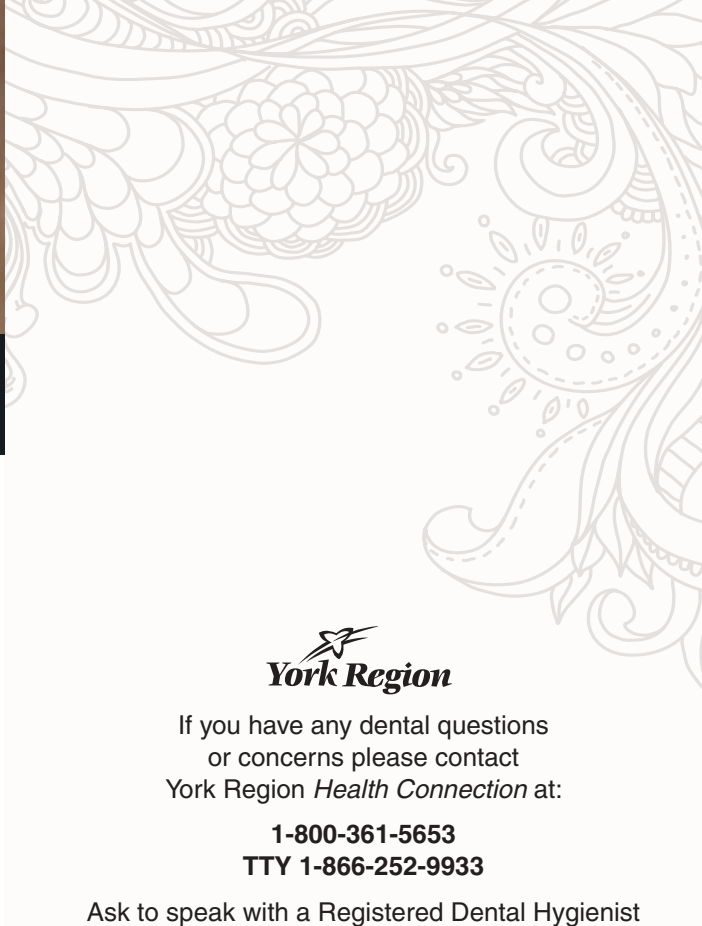
Continue to practice good oral hygiene.

Watch for chronic irritation or poor healing.

Remove oral jewellery and clean it well (wash your hands before removing oral jewellery).

You may wish to remove oral jewellery during contact sports to prevent mouth injury and possible choking.

A night guard may be necessary to protect the teeth.



If you have any dental questions or concerns please contact York Region *Health Connection* at:

**1-800-361-5653**

**TTY 1-866-252-9933**

Ask to speak with a Registered Dental Hygienist

For more information please visit our website:

**[www.york.ca/teeth](http://www.york.ca/teeth)**



# Oral Piercing

**Risk Factors**

**Be a Smart Consumer**

**Follow-up Care**





## Oral Piercing

Oral piercing may be trendy, but it can pose some health problems such as **pain, swelling, infections and injury to gums and teeth.**

Oral piercing involves inserting studs or rings in the tongue, uvula (the soft tissue hanging at the back of the mouth), lips, cheeks, or a combination of sites. Local anaesthetic (freezing) is generally not used.

**If you are considering oral piercing, know the risks**

## If you are considering oral piercing, Know the risks:

**Tooth fracture** - oral jewellery may damage teeth or fillings; fractures can be severe enough to damage the nerve of the tooth.

**Infection** - swelling and a pale yellowish discharge around the piercing site.

**Potential for disease transmission** - such as Hepatitis, HIV, herpes, if proper sterilization methods are not used.

**Allergic Reactions** - to nickel or other alloys used in the metals. All oral jewellery should be made of inert non-toxic metals such as stainless steel, 14K gold, niobium or titanium.

**Actions** - you could accidentally swallow the oral jewellery if it comes apart.

**Speech problems** - your speech may be affected and only become normal again if oral jewellery is removed.

**Drooling** - increased saliva flow.

**Other** - constant irritation to gum tissue and damage to veins and nerves resulting in permanent loss of taste, sensation and limited tongue movement.

Certain health problems (epilepsy, valve replacement, weakened immune system) or medications (blood thinners) should also be taken into account, because piercing may cause negative reactions.

**Never pierce yourself or let a friend do it. It isn't worth the risk.**

**If you are aware of all the risks and complications from oral piercing but still decide to have it done, then...**

## Be a Smart Consumer

Talk to a health care professional (dentist, physician, nurse) before making your decision.

An establishment should not pierce on the first visit.

A reputable piercer will not pierce adolescents (under 18 years of age) without parental consent.

Ask if the piercing establishment provides written and verbal instructions on before and after care.

Does the studio seem clean?  
Ask about their sterilization practices.

Make sure the piercer wears clean gloves.

