

THE LOW DOWN ON GENITAL PIERCING

As a sex worker you have no doubt encountered myriad pierced nipples, navels and tongues, and discovered the increased sensitivity of these areas. Pierced tongues are fairly common, but the first glimpse of some genital piercings can be intimidating. Here's the run down on the various genital piercings you may come across, and what to be aware of when performing sexwork.

YOU WILL FIND

You will find clients with genital piercings are generally very proud of them. Nearly all have an erotic value in the mind of the client, whether it is psychologically arousing or purely a physical stimulus. Nearly all piercings result in heightened sensitivity of the pierced area. This is especially true for ring piercings, which slide through areas rich in nerve endings, such as the Prince Albert and the Clit-hood piercing. These piercings make foreplay ridiculously simple. Many people worry that a pierced cock is going to cause discomfort when it is inside of them. The Ampallang and the Apadravya piercings are probably the ones to take the most care with, due to the fact that the piercing protrudes wider than the head of the penis on both sides.

If your client is pierced you should use extra strength condoms [sagami sustaining or durex Avanti condoms are ideal], and keep in mind that the chances of the condom breaking are increased. You may come across women with genital piercings when you do a couple. Although women's piercings are usually tucked in surrounding flesh, they still could rip a condom or dental dam.

If a piercing looks even slightly inflamed or crusty, it's not worth the risk of catching hepatitis or any other STI!

Vigorous sex, or even an unfortunate knock on the sports field can open up and inflame the track of a piercing. Sexual activity with an unhealed piercing is extremely high risk.

There are two main types of genital piercings for women. There is the labia piercing and the 'hood' piercing that lances the protective pocket of skin over the clitoris. It is very rare to find a piercing that actually pierces the clitoris as this piercing risks permanent damage and complications.

Guys have a wider variety of genital piercings. There is the Prince Albert, which is a ring that slides up through the urethra and out either the top or bottom of the cock head. There is the Apadravya or Ampallang, which are barbell piercings straight through the head of the penis. There are piercings through the scrotum [Hafada], and the Guiche which is a piercing beneath and behind the scrotum. The guiche is the hardest piercing of all to heal.

The traditional Japanese practice of implanting pearls beneath skin on the shaft of the penis is perhaps one of the more rare piercings in New Zealand, and should not be confused with the manifestation of some heinous disease. Today teflon implants and steel ball bearings are also used for these implants, and the procedure isn't exclusively restricted to the genitals.

CONSIDERING GETTING ONE?

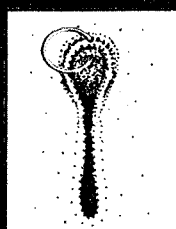
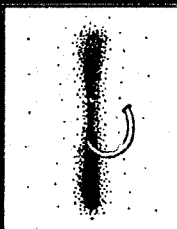
As a sex worker you may need to give your body some time to recover after a piercing, so PLAN AHEAD and take some days off! For women a fresh genital piercing can feel very sore like an intense bruise, but this feeling only lasts a couple of days. For men, cock-head piercings may bleed for a couple days, feel bruised and swollen, and need a couple of weeks before being put back into action.

Ensure you go to a professional body piercer who uses an autoclave to sterilise all their instruments between

clients. Methylated spirits does not kill STI's and is not a method of sterilising instruments. A well-maintained autoclave is the only machine that is capable of sterilising stainless steel instruments and needles. Never let anyone pierce you with a piercing gun like they use for piercing ears in a chemist. This method is not sterile and certainly not appropriate for the precision of a labia piercing. These guns pierce your skin with cheap jewellery that is not sterile. A huge part of ensuring your new piercing heals well is to ensure you are using high quality custom-made jewellery. This jewellery is surgical stainless steel with a faultlessly smooth surface. Alternatively it may be made of titanium or niobium. A professional piercer should remove your selected piece of jewellery from a sterile medical packet in front of you. They should wear latex gloves [a fresh pair] and explain what they're doing step by step. Do not leave without receiving after care advice. There are proper ways to clean your piercing and appropriate products to use for ongoing care. Do not be timid about demanding excellent and professional health standards from a body piercer. After all, being pierced by an unclean needle carries the same risk as having unprotected sex with a stranger.

Piercings can go wrong. You can minimise the risk by going to a professional for the procedure and by taking care of yourself and the piercing after its been done. Don't be one of the macho-men who arrive shivering into A&E with a blue balloon-like willie due to a shoddy piercing. If you suspect your piercing is infected, or that something has gone wrong, go straight to a professional doctor! Don't wait and just hope your immune system wins the good fight on your behalf.

LABIA

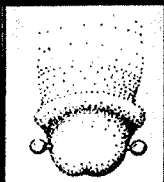


HOOD

Like the frenum piercing, labia piercing has a strong history in European chastity regimes. In the name of chastity enforcement labia on both sides were pierced with rings, and additional devices added to prevent access to the vagina.

The hood piercing is what many refer to as a clitoris piercing. Realistically it is not practical to pierce the actual clitoris; instead the flap or 'hood' of skin that lies directly over the clitoris is pierced.

DID YOU KNOW



AMPALLANG The history of the Ampallang is found in ancient Indian Rites of Passage. These Rites of Passage were sacred rituals marking a boy's departure from childhood into manhood.



APADRAVYA The Apadravya features in the Kama Sutra as a device with the power "to excite one's lover into the realms of ecstasy", and is therefore documented as a very old form of genital piercing.



FRENUM The Frenum Piercing is of European origin. Historically, in conjunction with other devices, it was used to aid chastity and prevent masturbation. To achieve this end things like weights and cages were added to the piercing.



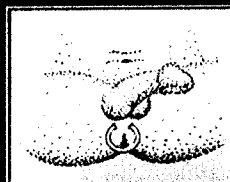
PRINCE ALBERT The Prince Albert is indeed named after a pompous Prince. The prudish Victorians called it a 'dressing ring'. It was used to firmly leash the penis over to the side of the trousers, minimising any unfashionable manly bulge in the loin hugging trousers.



DYDOE The Dydoe piercing seems to have a fairly recent history, and are said to return much of the sensation lost with circumcision.



HAFADA The Hafada is another 'rites of passage' piercing. It was believed to prevent the testes ever returning to where they descended from, in this way it's regarded a badge of manhood. This practice comes from the Middle East and North America. The piercings were decorated with precious stones relative to the individual's wealth and social standing.



GUICHE The Guiche, [pronounced 'geesh'] has its origin in the South Pacific and pierces through the ridge of skin between the scrotum and the anus.



IMPLANTS Implants have their history in Japanese culture. Japanese sailors once implanted pearls with the aid of a sharpened chopstick, underneath the loose skin on the shaft of the penis. The implants were used to enhance masturbation.