



Most dentists discourage oral piercing because of **health risks**.

Some of the health risks are:

- **Infection** - the mouth is moist with many bacteria (germs) making it a perfect place for infections. More bacteria can be introduced by unsterile piercing equipment or touching mouth jewelry.
- **Bleeding** - damage to the tongue's blood vessels during piercing can cause serious blood loss.
- **Swelling, pain and nerve damage** - swelling and pain are common after piercing. The tongue could swell so much that it blocks the airway. It's possible to injure a nerve during tongue piercing, which may affect your sense of taste or how you move your mouth.
- **Choking hazard** - loose jewelry can become a choking hazard and, if swallowed, can injure the digestive tract or lungs.
- **Excessive drooling** - the piercing can cause you to produce more saliva.
- **Damage to the teeth** - the jewelry can chip, crack or scratch teeth causing permanent damage. It can also damage crowns or fillings.
- **Gum disease** - the jewelry can injure the gums causing them to pull away from the tooth. Teeth may become loose or need to be removed.
- **Blood-borne diseases** - hepatitis B or C or herpes simplex virus can be transmitted.
- **Allergic response** - many people can be allergic to metal used in jewelry.