

Body Piercing: Picture This!



Pyogenic granuloma: Also known as "proud flesh," pyogenic granuloma is a common end result of an injury to the skin that may or may not have been apparent. Vascular proliferation, with or without infection, produces a small reddish violaceous or brownish black lesion that bleeds easily. The isolated single lesion is usually less than 1.5 cm in diameter and may be dome shaped, sessile, or pedunculated.



Impetigo: Impetigo is a common, superficial bacterial infection caused by group A β -hemolytic streptococci (impetigo contagiosa) or *Staphylococcus aureus* (bullous impetigo). Primary lesions vary from small vesicles to large bullae that rupture and discharge a honey-colored serous fluid. Secondary lesions appear as crusts from the discharge and appear to be lightly stuck on. Body piercing is associated with other localized infections—from *Staphylococcus* and *Pseudomonas* species—and, rarely, with bacteremia and endocarditis. Piercing carries a risk of transmitting tuberculosis, hepatitis C and B, and human immunodeficiency virus.



Cellulitis: This acute spreading infection of dermal and subcutaneous tissues is characterized by a red, hot, tender area of skin, often at the site of bacterial entry. It is caused most frequently by group A β -hemolytic streptococci or *S aureus*. Differential diagnosis includes deep vein thrombosis, thrombophlebitis, stasis dermatitis, early contact dermatitis, erythema nodosum, erythema migrans, and prevesicular herpes zoster.



Keloid: A keloid is a tumor resulting in an abnormal overgrowth of fibrous tissue following injury in certain predisposed persons. It occurs more commonly in people with black African ancestry than in whites. Injuries of the ear, back, and upper chest are especially prone to form keloids.

The potential for serious infection occurs during body piercing. The needles that are used to penetrate the skin at various sites on the body can become contaminated by blood or serum. HIV (the virus which causes AIDS), Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C viruses are present in blood and spread by infected blood entering another person's bloodstream. This can happen during body piercing, when needles used for penetrating the skin are contaminated with infected blood or serum and are not sterilized before use on another person. Blood or serum does not have to be visible on an instrument or needle for infection to be transmitted. It is important to note: all instruments that penetrate the skin of a person, including needles and attachments such as nozzles, needle bars and tubes, must be sterile. Oral piercings involving the tongue lips, cheeks and uvula have been associated with several conditions. These pathologic conditions range from scar formation and tooth fracture to metal hypersensitivity reactions and infection. Unattended infection sites can lead to tissue hyperplasia and airway obstruction.