What you should know – and what to expect - for safer piercing:

Before choosing a piercing artist, make sure to have all of your questions answered in a considerate and thorough manner, and that you are informed about how the equipment and work surfaces are cleaned and sterilized to minimize the risk that either staff or customers are exposed to the blood or other body fluids of others.

- The business should be licensed and established, and the piercer should have training and experience.
- Make sure the studio is clean, hygienic, and has a good reputation.
- Inform the artist if you have a metal allergy.
- Facial piercing is tricky. Talk to your artist about your options.
- Ear piercing guns should not be used for anything other than ear lobes.
- Proper sterilization of equipment is important. The shop should use an autoclave and ultrasonic cleanser for sterilizing instruments.
- Artists should wash their hands, and use new latex or latex free gloves.
- The artist must first clean the area to be pierced with soap and water and then with a skin antiseptic such as alcohol.
- Sterile surgical, single-use disposable piercing needles must be used for your body piercing, as well as sterile clamps and receiving tubes.
- Special non-allergenic body jewelry made for piercing should be used.
- The best place to pierce is a meaty skin area. Avoid the neck, joints, arteries and tendons.
- After the piercing, you should be provided with written aftercare instructions.
- A parent or legal guardian must sign a consent form in the presence of the piercer for a minor to legally get a piercing in New York State.

NYC Rules and Laws

- Statewide health regulations for body piercing are currently being developed by the New York State Department of Health under the statutory authority of Public Health Law Article 4A.

Temporary Body Art as an Alternative

- Possible alternatives if you are not ready for a piercing: magnetic body jewelry, clip on rings and earrings, temporary adhesive jewelry.
- Follow aftercare instructions given by the piercer.
- Healing times vary depending on what body part is pierced. Piercings can take from six weeks to over one year to heal.
- If you must touch the piercing while it's healing, wash your hands first.
- Do not sleep on your piercing or remove the jewelry until it's completely healed, Holes from piercings usually close up if you no longer wear the jewelry.
- If the pierced area becomes red, swollen, tender or if pus develops, you may have an infection. See your medical provider immediately.

Healing
When skin is pierced there is a risk of being exposed to viruses and germs including HIV, Hepatitis B and C, tetanus, that may causes rashes, infections and/or blood borne disease transmission. There is also risk of allergic reactions, prolonged bleeding, swelling, scarring and general discomfort. Existing medical conditions such as allergies, heart disease, diabetes, skin disorders or conditions that affect the immune system may increase the risk of complications from body piercing. You may wish to speak with a medical provider regarding potential health risks before getting a body piercing. Mouth piercing can damage teeth.

**Piercing Resources**

- Find a reliable artist and safety-conscious piercing studio - a studio that is a member of the Association of Professional Piercers (APP) is likely to be a clean and reliable shop. Website: [http://www.safepiercing.org/piercing/](http://www.safepiercing.org/piercing/) Phone: 888-515.4277
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): [http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/body_art/more-info.html](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/body_art/more-info.html)

**New School Policy**

- Piercing artists may not perform piercing on university premises.

**Resources at The New School**

- Student Health Services: [http://www.newschool.edu/student-health-services/](http://www.newschool.edu/student-health-services/)
- Assistant Director for Environmental Health & Safety Department of Facilities Management, Katherine Perkins: Tel: 212.229.5456 x4628 perkin-sk@newschool.edu
- Housing and Residence Life: [http://www.newschool.edu/student-housing/](http://www.newschool.edu/student-housing/)
- Tel: 212.229.5459 universityhousing@newschool.edu
- Safety Tips on variety of topics: [http://www.newschool.edu/ehs/safety-tips/](http://www.newschool.edu/ehs/safety-tips/)