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## Pierced clit

### Question

Hi Alice,

I would like to know what you've heard about pierced clitori. I've been told that the clitoris is one of the fastest parts of the body to heal after it is pierced, and that piercing it heightens sexual pleasure. Is there any truth to these rumors?

### Answer

Dear Reader,

The first thing to keep in mind about clitoral piercings is that the area being pierced is usually not the clitoris itself. What many people refer to as a “clit piercing” is actually a piercing of the skin around or near the clitoris or other genital area. Piercing of the clitoris is very rare both because many people's anatomies are not ideally suited to clit piercing (clitoris is not large enough to pierce or support the weight of jewelry) and the act of piercing the clit is often too intense for many folks. However, piercing a bundle of 8,000 nerves that has a primary purpose of sexual arousal would most definitely make sex feel more intense.

The most common clitoral-area piercing is the vertical clitoral hood (VCH). As the name implies, the VCH is a piercing vertically through the clitoral hood (the skin covering the glans of the clitoris). The other types of female genital piercings include horizontal clitoral hood (HCH — a horizontal hood piercing above the clitoris), “triangle” piercing (piercing the base of the clitoral hood similarly to the HCH, but below the clitoris), both inner and outer labial piercing, and the very rare piercing of the actual clitoris.

Healing time for genital piercings differ based on what, exactly, is pierced. The VCH usually heals in about one to four weeks, while the HCH heals in six to eight weeks and the "triangle" takes about two to three months. An actual clit piercing can take about four to six weeks to heal. Genital tissue is very vascular and flexible and will generally heal more quickly compared to ear cartilage, navels and noses, which can take approximately six months to heal. Also, keep in mind that healing time is often relative to a person's individual body.

Each type of genital piercing, and even the same piercing on different bodies, may result in different physical sensations. The kind, shape, and weight of the adornment and where it touches the genitals all affect pleasure. The VCH is the more popular clit piercing because it usually fits most comfortably with the body's shape and the placement allows the jewelry to stimulate the clitoris through direct contact. The "triangle" piercing also directly stimulates the clitoris, but from the underside. The HCH and labial piercings are less common and often times done for purely aesthetic reasons since the jewelry does not directly stimulate the clitoris. Once healed, experimentation with various sizes and lengths of jewelry to express beauty or generate sensation may be in order.

Generally speaking, clit piercings would not decrease sensitivity, but they may change the physical sensations during sex. Jewelry may be removed to allow the piercing to heal in order to bring sensitivity back to its original

state. Some research suggests that a supposed loss of sensitivity is more likely due to the fact that a person may become accustomed to the level of stimulation felt with the piercing and does not actually signify a decrease in feeling.

When it comes to sexuality and sexual acts, personal preferences and comfort vary with each person. Just as some favor certain sexual positions, others respond more to specific piercings, especially those below the belt.

For more detailed recommendations and a list of precautions regarding piercings of the clitoris, check out the Association of Professional Piercers website, as well as the links they provide to other piercing-related sites. And remember, it's strongly advised that any piercing be done under safe and sanitary conditions in a location that is credentialed.

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