



## The Risks of Oral Piercings

### Oral piercings can cause permanent damage.

These piercings, which involve the tongue, lips, cheeks, uvula and even tongue splitting, can cause adverse oral and systemic side effects, as well as dental damage.

### Some common risks of oral piercings include:

- **Infection, pain and swelling.** Millions of bacteria live in your mouth, so oral piercings can easily become infected and painful. If left untreated, an infection from a tongue piercing can also be life threatening as it may cause your tongue to swell and block your airway.
- **Damage to gums, teeth and fillings.** Biting or playing with a piercing can harm your gums and result in cracked, scratched or sensitive teeth. Piercings can also damage fillings.
- **Hypersensitivity to metals.** Allergic reactions are possible at the piercing site.

### If you already have oral piercings:

- Watch for signs of infection and immediately contact your dentist or physician should an infection arise.
- Keep the pierced area clean and use a mouth rinse after every meal.
- Be gentle and aware of the jewelry's movement when talking and chewing.
- Remove the piercing and use a mouthguard when playing sports.
- Visit your dentist regularly, brush two times a day and floss daily.



- **Bad odor.** With poor oral care, food and debris can collect over and around the piercing. This can lead to an altered sense of taste and bad breath.
- **Damage to nerves or blood vessels.** A tongue piercing can cause temporary or sometimes permanent nerve damage, leaving you with a numb tongue. This affects your sense of taste and movement of your mouth. Damage to your tongue's blood vessels can cause serious blood loss.
- **Excessive drooling.** Your tongue piercing can increase saliva production.
- **Dental appointment difficulties.** Oral piercings can get in the way of dental care by interfering with X-rays and preventing your dentist from performing a complete oral examination.

Since your oral health is important for overall health, the effects of an oral piercing may have a greater impact than you think. You are not only risking your oral health, but also the well-being of your entire body. Talk to your dentist for more information.

Visit [truassure.com](https://www.truassure.com) for more oral health resources and information.