

**Olney Pediatrics**  
**18111 Prince Philip Drive Suite 311**  
**Olney, MD 20832**  
**(301) 774-4100**

### **Medical Ear Piercing**

We have selected the Blomdahl® Medical Ear Piercing System which is only available to physicians. Dr. Shira Schwartz performs the ear piercing.

#### **Why should I choose medical ear piercing at Olney Pediatrics?**

In our office your child will receive professional care from a pediatrician who has been trained in sterile technique and wound management.

The Blomdahl® Medical Ear Piercing System uses single-use cassettes which minimize the chance of infection at the piercing site and medical-grade plastic piercing studs which eliminates the risk of nickel allergy. Using this system also eliminates the possibility of patient-to-patient cross-contamination because only the single-use part of the equipment ever comes in contact with the skin at the piercing site.

We also offer pre-procedure numbing cream for the ear lobe(s) (which needs to be left on for 30 minutes to be effective) in order to minimize pain during the procedure.

#### **What are the age restrictions for ear piecing at Olney Pediatrics?**

We recommend ear piercing occur between 2.5 months and 12 months for infants and when school-aged children are 7 years old or older. Waiting until children are 2.5 months old ensures that they have had their first set of vaccines and allows the ear to grow big enough to allow for accurate placing of the earring. We do not recommend ear piercing for children between 12 months and 7 years of age because the child must either be small enough to allow us to completely control her movements during the procedure or cooperative enough to sit still during the procedure and be capable of actively participating in aftercare. All eligible patients must be completely up to date on all vaccines.

#### **Can I get ear piercing done at my child's well or sick visit?**

Ear piercings are only done during visits solely dedicated to the medical ear piercing procedure. We do ear piecing by appointment only and not as an "add on" to another sick or well visit. This allows enough time to perform the procedure, explain and answer questions about the aftercare, and allow numbing cream to take effect.

#### **Where do we pierce?**

We only pierce ear lobes and only do one piercing per lobe per visit. We will perform a second, but not a third piercing, in a single ear lobe. We do not pierce ear cartilage (the upper part of the ear), noses, or belly buttons.

#### **How much does it cost?**

- We charge \$80 to pierce up to 2 ears. This price includes piercing the ears and the temporary piercing studs which are removed after 6-8 weeks.
- If you choose to use the numbing cream, we charge an extra \$20.
- Full payment is due when you check in for your ear piercing appointment.
- Six weeks after the procedure the piercing studs should be removed and replaced with earrings of your choosing.

- Since this is a cosmetic procedure, it will not be filed to your insurance.

### **Is swimming ok immediately after ear piercing?**

We recommend avoiding swimming for 2-3 weeks after ear piercing. Chlorine from pools and bacteria in un-chlorinated waters may irritate or contaminate the wound and delay healing.

### **What are the risks of ear piercing?**

Before we start the procedure, we will ask you to sign an informed consent form that reviews the risks listed below.

- Infection: There is a risk of infection anytime the skin is broken. We reduce this risk significantly by using sterile technique, using sterile, single-use piercing cassettes, and providing specific aftercare instructions.
- Pain: Even without numbing cream the pain is brief and similar to vaccine injection using the Blomdahl® system. Patients who are old enough to communicate verbally sometimes say that their earlobes briefly feel warm and flushed after the procedure. In order to minimize any discomfort, our price includes the use of numbing cream.
- Nickel allergy: Allergic contact dermatitis (ACD) is an itchy rash that occurs when your skin comes in contact with a typically harmless substance. Nickel is one of the most common causes of ACD and once you develop nickel allergy you will always be sensitive to it. Unfortunately, nickel is commonly used as a metal hardener and most metals used for ear piercing contain (or “leak”) enough nickel to trigger a potential allergic reaction. Fresh piercings allow direct and constant contact between a minor open wound and the metal, which contains nickel.
- We chose to use an ear piercing system that uses medical-grade plastic in order to avoid nickel exposure during the ear piercing healing process.
- Keloids: Keloids are shiny, smooth and rounded skin elevations, which can form at the piercing site in some patients after ear lobe piercing because of altered wound healing. Keloids tend to be familial, are more likely to occur in patients with darker skin pigmentation, and generally occur in persons 10 to 30 years of age.

### **How long do we keep the ear piercing studs in place?**

We recommend NOT replacing the original ear piercing studs for 6 weeks. The ear piercings studs we use are thicker (1.3 mm) than the standard earring post (1.0 mm). The larger piercing hole makes it easier to switch to normal earrings after the healing period and reduces the risk of repeatedly re-injuring the ear-piercing site when replacing earrings, which should therefore reduce the risk of piercing site infection.

### **How do I take care of the pierced ears afterward?**

1. Clean the piercing site thoroughly twice a day, using liquid soap and clean running water at least once a day (preferably after showering or washing the hair).
2. Dry area well with clean gauze or a cotton tipper applicator and leave open to air.
3. Leave the ear piercing studs in the ear lobe for 6 weeks before replacing with earrings.
4. Unlike conventional ear piercings, there is no need to rotate the Blomdahl medical-grade plastic studs to prevent them from adhering to the skin.