



## NATURAL JEWELRY AFTERCARE

The use of natural materials in general, is at your own risk. Remember, organics are not meant to be worn in unhealed tissue (this includes both initial piercings and new stretches); and, might not be an appropriate choice for sensitive individuals or moist areas of the body. To avoid throwing your favorite pieces in the garbage after only a short while, proper care is the key.

Most jewelry cleaning solutions that can be bought in stores are made from chemicals which can cause reactions on skin when inserted into the body. If using a polishing cloth on your jewelry, please make sure that you rinse and dry afterwards before re-inserting.

Pearls and Opals both have a high percentage of water in their makeup and tend to crack easily when not cared for. The luster of natural Pearls can diminish over time with excessive contact to perfumes, oils, hair products, etc. Use a soft toothbrush and warm water (toothpaste is also an old jewelers secret) and scrub gently, then rinse with warm water. Mineral oil can be used to help reduce cracking, just coat with a small amount of oil after the drying stage. Opals and Pearls should only be cleaned once every six months.

Stones and gemstones are created from the magma or Earth's inner core, and have gone through a natural process of heating, cooling and displacement on their way to their present form. The energy field of different gemstones is influenced by geometrical form, color and slight vibration. Each stone is made up of tiny crystals which are in constant motion, thus sending forth a frequency. The gemstone's color also plays an influential role in the stone's healing energy. The light and color can stimulate, calm, purify or heal. Diamonds, Ruby's and Sapphires, Emeralds (precious stones) are among the most durable substances on earth. Because their molecular structure is dense, they are not porous, and therefore can be cleaned with stronger alkalis. However, semi-precious gemstones, like tanzanite, turquoise, amethyst, amber, jade, etc., are very porous stones and liquids can be absorbed if you're soaking them. Watch out for water and detergents, which can be trapped inside the stones and can diminish their natural colors. Most stones should be washed in a mild salt water mix and re-charged in sun or moonlight, but it is best to read up on the type of stone you have purchased and follow directions; seeing as aftercare varies depending on the stones physical characteristics. Stone plugs also tend to be quite heavy, so be aware of the chance of them falling out and cracking and chipping; or, even cracking and chipping whatever they fall on (larger stone plugs have been known to crack tiles when dropped).

Long term appearance of wood can change from absorbing the oils in your skin, which is why your piercings are less likely to smell (ear funk, cheese, sebum, etc.). Wooden pieces do not conduct cold or heat, they are lightweight and they often stay in place better than other types of materials of plugs. Keep out of direct sunlight and clean periodically even if not worn. Jojoba, olive, peanut, mineral, emu or Vitamin E oils are all great for keeping woods moist. Beeswax can be a great protective coating for both the wood and lubrication for your ear. Food grade oils may break down with heat and time, so wash your jewelry often and reapply oil if necessary. Avoid drastic temperature changes (storing in bathrooms) and make sure to remove your jewelry before swimming and showering. Wood forms the circulatory and support system in trees. The grain you may see running up and down in your plugs is what the trees use to transport water. When the material gets wet, it may try to absorb the moisture and the cells that form the grain can swell. This can make the material feel less smooth than when new. If needed, smooth surface with 800 – 1000 grit sandpaper, then re-oil.

If correctly shaped and manufactured, glass is an excellent material; comfortable to wear; tough; safe for the body; and, requires the least amount of care. Like stone, glass is heavy and can get slippery when wet from sweat or moisture of any kind. Glass jewelry is most safe when being worn and is the only material other than steel and titanium that is safe for initial piercings.

Biological Organic Materials are quite common in the world of piercings and are what were used by many cultures and tribes that pierced traditionally. Like wood, they are all well suited as body jewelry because they can be easily shaped with either bone, horn, ivory, etc., and it's easy to make a smooth surface. Biological organic materials allow your body to breathe and they never get cold during winter. Be sure to avoid any drastic temperature changes and keep out of moist areas. When you remove your jewelry, wipe it clean with a soft, damp cloth and dry it. Once dried, oil frequently to help maintain a constant moisture content, as drying out can result in cracking along grain lines or fissures that are common in these materials. With prolonged wear some of these materials, primarily the ones lighter in color, will start to take on a grey or yellowish hue. This is normal, but can be delayed or avoided in some cases with proper care. It is best to store these materials in a cool, dry, dark place.

If you are experiencing any kind of pain, swelling or itching from natural or organic jewelry, take it out immediately. Clean the jewelry and if irritation persists, you might be allergic to the jewelry.