



Cracked Teeth: Is It Worth It?

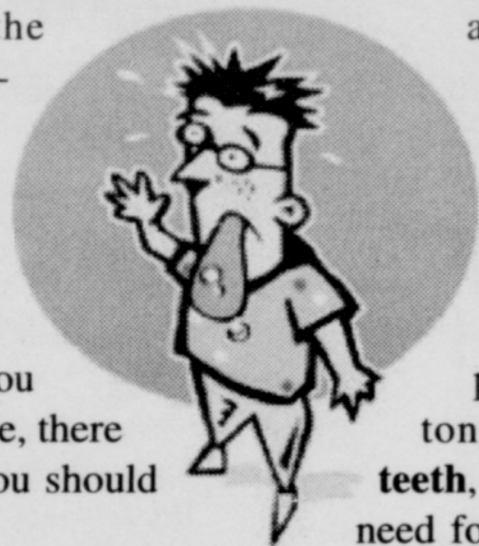
by Teri (the tooth fairy) Coddington, RDH

Oral Piercing – The Jewelry, The Risks

Piercing, like tattooing, is just one of today’s popular forms of “body art” and self-expression. Piercing may seem daring, cool and safe; however, piercing the tongue, lips, or cheeks is not as safe as some would have you believe.

That’s because the mouth’s moist environment, home to huge amounts of breeding **bacteria**, is an ideal place for **infection**. If you’re thinking about getting a piercing, or if you already have one or more, there are some health risks you should know about.

The harmful effects can happen during the piercing, soon after, or even long after the procedure. An infection can quickly become life threatening if it’s not treated promptly. Bacteria can enter the bloodstream through the piercing site in the mouth and travel to the



heart, which can cause **endocarditis** or even **death**.

After a piercing, the tongue may swell and block the airway. Nerve damage can result in a numb tongue and feeling might not ever return. In addition to serious health problems, a large protruding scar can form around the piercing site. Swallowing the jewelry can puncture the bowels or intestines.

One of the biggest problems with having a tongue piercing is **cracked teeth**, which usually leads to the need for dental restorations, such as crowns or fillings. In addition to getting cracked teeth, you may get gum damage, recession, and sensitive teeth.

Don’t pierce on a whim. The piercing will be an added responsibility to your life. It will need constant attention and upkeep.

CHS Funding Includes Priority I and II Care, With Limits

by Judy Muschamp

Eligible Contract Health households recently were mailed a postcard alerting you to our funding crisis and moving priorities to emergent/acutely urgent care only. This action was necessary in order to preserve enough funds to cover the most dire health conditions through the end of December 2004.

As you all may know, Priority I care is very restrictive and the CHS technicians who must implement the policy receive the unfortunate brunt of unhappy callers.

In recognition of the important health care needs of tribal members, Tribal Council has allocated additional tribal resources to CHS in order to expand care to Priority I and II. So in addition to emergent/acutely urgent care, some preventive care services will be available **with prior approval**.

Preventive care is primary health care aimed at preventing disease or disability. This includes services proven effective in avoiding the occurrence of

an illness or condition. Examples of care include non-urgent preventive clinical care, routine prenatal care, screenings for known diseases, mammograms, immunizations, well-child exams, sports physicals, and many others.

Because all Indian Health Service funds have been obligated, Tribal Council has the authority to regulate how tribal resources will be administered. All council members impressed upon staff the importance of using this additional funding in a fair and equitable manner. In other words, one individual’s health needs cannot exhaust all resources.

To comply with council’s directive of fairness and equitable administration of tribal resources, **caps and limits have been established**.

During the risk period when IHS catastrophic funds are not available, Priority I services are capped at \$25,000 per episode. Priority II services are capped at \$150 per person, per week. Unspent balances will not be carried forward from week to week. Individuals will be personally responsible for payment of care that exceeds these caps and limits.

Emergency care must be reported to CHS within 72 hours. Preventive or specialty care must be approved prior to service.

Please call CHS at 541-444-1236 or 1-800-628-5720 for more information or to obtain prior approval.

After hours clinic providers (Gatekeepers) are available to assist you in determining whether you require immediate medical attention. After 5 p.m. weekdays and all day weekends, call 541-444-1236 if you need medical consultation.

All emergency room reports are reviewed before CHS will make payment. The purpose of review is to assess validity of the emergency. Payment will be denied if routine care is obtained in an emergency room.

Please note: Gatekeepers cannot obligate CHS funds; you will still need to call CHS within 72 hours of emergency room services.

Use the Siletz Mail Order Pharmacy

The Siletz Clinic Pharmacy provides mail order service to Siletz Tribal members and their minor dependents in the 11-county service area. You may receive up to a 90-day supply of maintenance medication.

Mailing will be provided to those members who live 40 miles outside the Siletz clinic area. If another insurance is billed, a 30-day supply may be the maximum per fill.

Prescriptions will be mailed via U.S. Postal Service. Prescriptions requiring special handling will be sent via certified mail. Our pharmacy has limited storage space, so we order your prescriptions when we receive your order. Please allow 7-10 working days for your order to be processed.

The Siletz Tribal Health Program is only responsible for providing drug medication that will assist in maintaining the quality of patient care. Cost containment is important, therefore the following classes of drugs will not be provided:

- Drugs used for cosmetic purposes
- Weight reduction products
- Fertility drugs
- Sexual performance enhancement drugs
- Investigative drugs
- Food supplements
- Vitamins and over-the-counter products that are not on the formulary list
- Compounded prescriptions are covered with limitations
- Controlled substances for intractable pain may be dispensed only in accordance with clinic policy. Your doctor will be requested to provide a copy of the pain contract

A registered pharmacist is available for consultation anytime during standard business hours (8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, except Tuesday afternoons).

Using Mail-Order Service

- Call 1-800-648-0449 or 541-444-9624 for a refill on your prescription.
- Send an order form and your new prescription to the address listed on the mail-order service form. You can obtain forms from either the Siletz Clinic Pharmacy, Contract Health Service, or your local community health advocate.
- If the prescription is too soon to fill or not fillable, you will be notified by phone.

You are advised to transfer your prescriptions from Pequot before the end of December 2004. Effective Jan. 1, 2005, orders through Pequot will not be filled. Your existing Pequot Rx card will remain valid for up to \$500 annually at a local retail pharmacy.

For assistance, please contact your local community health advocate or the Siletz Clinic Pharmacy.