

FROM:

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TO: Personal Service Setting Operators

DATE: June 15, 2026

**Re: Piercing Jewellery: Tube (Threadless Flat Back or Labret) Posts/Studs**

**Update:**

The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) has identified specific bulk-purchased, non-sterile piercing jewellery that is being cleaned and sterilized on-site at various personal service setting business locations. The jewellery of concern has a small tube in the back known as “threadless flat backs” (also called push-fit, press-fit or labret posts/studs) and are shown in Figure 1 below. These items cannot be safely sterilized in a tabletop steam autoclave unless the manufacturer says they can. Businesses may only sterilize this jewellery on-site if they have written proof from the autoclave manufacturer that it is safe to do so. **If not, the jewellery must be bought pre-packaged and already sterile from a reputable supplier.**



Figure 1. Picture of Threadless Flat Back Jewellery. Generated using DALL-E (OpenAI, 2026) with prompt: "Create image of how pin is inserted into tube of threadless flat back jewellery".

**Background:**

Small tubes/holes cannot be cleaned and sterilized easily by tabletop steam sterilizers. Specific equipment to sterilize small/narrow tubes is required and is not generally available for retail businesses to buy. As with any piercing, viruses and bacteria can enter the body through the piercing site and may cause an infection.

These infections can be:

- Local skin infections (for example: *Staphylococcus aureus*); and/or
- More serious infections that affect the blood, heart or brain.

Should you have any questions or require further assistance, please contact the Infection Prevention and Control Team as listed above.