

How Your Belly Button Piercing Changes When You Get Pregnant

Belly buttons change in shape and size during and after pregnancy. Here's how to avoid stretching and scarring if you have a piercing, according to plastic surgeons and piercers.

Navel piercings have long been a ubiquitous symbol of sex appeal and youth, especially during MTV's *TRL* era of the early aughts; belly button rings were everywhere, and the accompanying shimmering hardware was displayed proudly. Fast forward almost 20 years, and many of those teens with **belly button** piercings have become parents.

"Navel piercings in the millennial-plus demographic was a very, very, very common thing to do," says Chicago-based board-certified plastic surgeon Julius Few. "I think piercings on the body are still quite common, and corrective procedures are something that comes up in my practice quite often."

The Effects of Pregnancy on a Piercing

While there is no medical reason to remove a completely healed navel piercing during pregnancy, according to the **American Pregnancy Association**, a piercing is stretched both up and down, as well as side to side, says Beverly Hills board-certified plastic surgeon Sheila Nazarian. "That movement, in combination with the natural expansion of the skin with pregnancy, causes a stretched-out look, and the only way to remove this appearance is to cut it out."

How to Prevent Piercing-Related Scarring

Although bodies react to stressors differently, the scar tissue created by a piercing is not going to stretch uniformly, or even the same way your regular skin stretches, says New York City board-certified plastic surgeon Melissa Doft, which means that the **belly button area** is going to look visibly incongruent compared to the body's natural skin texture.

Surgery Is an Effective Option

Once the piercing track has hardened to form thick scar tissue, noninvasive cosmetic procedures will have no effect. To get rid of the webbing effect, a doctor "basically has to cut it out," says Few, but there are a few options to consider, depending on the severity of the distortion.

"I don't think you can ever fully go back to a completely normal appearance, but you can make it much better by doing what's called an umbilicoplasty to try to create more of an innie effect," says Few. "For a relatively small area, it makes for a complicated treatment."

For women who have low to moderate skin tissue scarring, stretching, or sagging, Doft recommends a **smaller in-office procedure**, performed under local anesthesia to remove the skin and the tunnel of the piercing.

"I just did one exactly like this before Christmas," she says. "I made a small incision just to [pull] everything up, so the belly button would be a nice crescent instead of that extra overhang."

A third option, a tummy tuck, essentially removes all stretch marks and other skin irregularities. According to Teitelbaum, it's a good option for those looking to tweak their postpartum navel piercing. "I've never seen someone successfully fix it with just a very localized scar," he explains.

Regardless of which procedure you opt for, the popularity of the so-called "**mommy makeovers**" continues to soar (Teitelbaum says that the post-pregnancy patient is his "most common patient"), meaning that the skill and technology involving procedures for the stomach and belly button are safer and more effective to patients' desired results than ever before.

Direct Link: <https://www.allure.com/story/pregnancy-belly-button-piercing>

