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The Hole Truth

She said she had a few reservations, "but my friend and I sort of interrogated him and he said he'd done over 1,000 people," recalled Funderburg, who now attends Marymount University in Arlington.

The procedure, she said, was performed without anesthesia, took about 10 seconds and didn't hurt at first. The pain came later.

"My tongue swelled up and then turned black and blue, and it was very hard to talk," she recalled. "I had to chew all the way in the back of my mouth for weeks."

Funderburg said that when her mother spotted the tongue stud several months later, she was upset.

"I told her I was thinking of getting one on my nose, but she said, 'No more piercings,'" Funderburg recalled. "I know my mom thinks it's a form of mutilation, but it's not. It's a matter of self-expression." The only downside of her eyebrow ring is that she had to remove it for her job, which has a no-facial-piercings policy.

Funderburg said she has not had problems with her tongue stud but occasionally catches the barbell-shaped jewelry on a fork while eating.

There is one area Funderburg said she has no intention of piercing: her genitals, as one of her friends did.

"No way," Funderburg said. "Absolutely not." ?

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When Marymount University student Alicia Funderburg, 18, had her tongue pierced last year, the 10-second procedure didn't hurt. But soon she experienced swelling and pain that lasted for a few weeks. (Susan Biddle - Twp)

GRAPHIC



The Price of Piercing
While body piercing has increased in popularity and social acceptance, long healing time, infections and scarring can plague those who pierce.

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