

OPRAH'S FRIGHT OF PASSAGE



February 22, 2005 -- OPRAH Winfrey fussed like a little girl yesterday as she became the last woman in the world — presumably — to get her ears pierced.

The piercing was done live on her show by no less than a plastic surgeon — to the delight of a screaming studio audience.

Winfrey gets ears pierced at last

"Ohhhh!" cried the daytime diva as Dr. Emily Pollard shot a diamond stud into Oprah's earlobe using a small piercing gun. "I need a shot of tequila!"

Before the procedure, Oprah explained that she'd never gotten her ears pierced because she was scared.

"So I just turned 51, and I'm feeling stronger and better than ever," she said.

"This year, I wanted to give myself a special birthday present.

"All my life, I have been an old-fashioned, clip-on-earring kind of person. I have worn the most expensive jewelry — all my own — and have only always had clips because I have been afraid to have my ears pierced."

Pollard spent more than 10 minutes wrangling with Oprah — who had enlisted an audience member to hold her hand — over every last detail of the procedure.

The doctor used ice and numbing drops to minimize Oprah's pain. But it wasn't enough.

"That did not *not* hurt," Oprah complained afterwards.

— *Don Kaplan*