

Sterilization Protocol

Please practice universal precautions and follow all standard infection control practices.

Begin instrument processing with donning personal protective equipment – Fluid resistant body protection, protective eyewear, mask, and heavy duty nitrile gloves

CLEANING USED INSTRUMENTS

1. Clean hands with alcohol hand rub and don gloves. Then don heavy duty utility gloves
2. Place cassettes and any loose instruments in ultrasonic cleaner and replace the cover. Process instruments for 15 minutes.
3. Lift the basket inside ultrasonic cleaner and rinse. Dump instruments onto clean dry towel. If additional items are still in ultrasonic cleaner, use tongs to pick-up. Do not reach into the ultrasonic cleaner to remove instruments.
4. Place a second clean, dry towel on top of instruments and thoroughly dry prior to packaging.
5. If additional manual scrubbing is necessary, use a long-handled brush and scrub under water to prevent splashing.
6. Visually inspect instruments for residual debris and damage; re-clean/replace as necessary.

LUBRICATING HANDPIECES

1. Place each hand piece on the lubricator and push start.
2. Wipe off any visible debris.
3. Place the hand piece into a sterilization bag.

PACKAGING INSTRUMENTS

1. After cleaning and drying the instruments, place them in a sterilizing pouch.
2. Package loose instruments so they lay in a single layer.
3. Hinged instruments should be processed opened and unlocked.
4. Transport the cassettes and pouches to the sterilizer area.

STERILIZATION

1. Place instruments in the sterilizer and use the appropriate cycle.
2. Load the sterilizer according to manufacturer's instructions. Do not overload. Use the manufacturer's recommended cycle times for wrapped instruments.
3. Allow packages to dry before removing them from the sterilizer.
4. Allow packages to cool before handling. Use the oven mitts provided to remove sterilized instruments.
5. When removing packages from sterilizer verify sterilization has occurred by inspecting process indicators.

INSTRUMENT DISPENSION

1. Several volunteers will be designated to dispense instruments to volunteers. These are the only volunteers that should handle sterilized instruments after they have cooled. Clinical volunteers (assistants, hygienists, dentists) are not allowed to reach into bins or grab sterilized instruments themselves.
2. Volunteers designated to dispense instruments should wash hands with alcohol hand sanitizer and don gloves. Place the requested instruments set-ups on barrier covered trays for transport by clinical volunteers to treatment areas.
3. Clinical staff will request what instruments they need and should wash hands with hand rub before receiving trays or instrument pouches for transport back to treatment areas.
4. Packages containing sterile supplies should be inspected before use to verify barrier integrity and dryness.
5. If packaging is compromised, instruments shall be re-cleaned, repackaged, and sterilized again.