INSTRUMENT PROCESSING GUIDELINES

INSTRUMENT PROCESSING AREA

• Sterilization records (mechanical, chemical, and biological) should be maintained in the sterilization area.

• If a spore test comes back positive, the proper troubleshooting procedures should be implemented. (For instructions on managing sterilization failures, visit the CDC website.)

• Sterilizers should be monitored at least weekly using a biological indicator and a matching control. (Using both a test and a control indicator from the same lot ensures that factors outside of the sterilization process have not affected the spores’ ability to be cultured.)

• A chemical indicator should be placed inside each instrument package prior to sterilization.

• Packages should be labeled with the date and, if multiple sterilizers are used within an area, the sterilizer used.

• Critical & semi-critical instruments should be inspected for remaining debris.

• Appropriate PPE (mask, protective eyewear and protective clothing) should be worn when splashing or spraying is anticipated during cleaning.

• Puncture-/chemical-resistant utility gloves should be worn when handling contaminated instruments.

• If visible debris is not removed, it will interfere with microbial inactivation and can compromise the disinfection or sterilization process.

1. RECEIVING, CLEANING & DECONTAMINATION

• Clamping should provide all disinfection and sterilization processes, so it should involve removal of debris as well as organic and inorganic contamination.

• If visible debris is not removed, it will interfere with microbial inactivation and can jeopardize the final disinfection or sterilization.

• Punchure (chemical-resistant) utility gloves should be worn when handling contaminated instruments and when performing instrument cleaning and decontamination procedures.

• Use automated cleaning equipment (e.g., ultrasonic cleaner or washer-disinfector) to increase productivity, improve cleaning effectiveness and decrease worker exposure to blood and body fluids.

• Work practice controls (such as a long-handled brush) should be used to minimize contact with sharp instruments if manual cleaning is necessary.

• After cleaning, instruments should be rinsed with water to remove chemical or detergent residue.

• Instruments should be dried before storage in a container system or wrap that is compatible with the type of sterilization process being used and designed to maintain sterility after the sterilization cycle. A chemical indicator should be placed inside each instrument package prior to sterilization.

• If the internal indicator is not visible from outside the package, an external indicator should be affixed to the pack.

• Packages should be labeled with the date and, if multiple sterilizers are used within an area, the sterilizer used should also be noted. (This simplifies retrieval of processed items in case of a sterilization failure.)

2. PREPARATION & PACKAGING

• After cleaning, critical and semi-critical instruments should be inspected for remaining debris.

• Before sterilization, instruments and other patient-care items should be assembled into sets (callipers, trays, and wraps) and placed into a container system for sterilization. They should be packaged using an FDA-cleared container system or wrap that is compatible with the type of sterilization process being used and designed to maintain sterility after the sterilization cycle. An internal chemical indicator should be placed inside each instrument package prior to sterilization.

• If the internal indicator is not visible from outside the package, an external indicator should be affixed to the pack.

• Packages should be labeled with the date and, if multiple sterilizers are used within an area, the sterilizer used should also be noted. (This simplifies retrieval of processed items in case of a sterilization failure.)

3. STERILIZATION (MONITORING)

• Mechanical, chemical, and biological monitors should be used according to the manufacturer’s instructions to ensure the effectiveness of the sterilization process.

• Each load should be monitored with mechanical and chemical indicators.

• A chemical indicator should be placed on the inside of each instrument package to be sterilized.

• If the internal indicator is not visible from the outside, another chemical indicator should be added to the outside of packages.

• Place packages correctly and loosely into the sterilizer so the sterilant can penetrate all contents.

• If mechanical or chemical indicators suggest inadequate processing, instruments should not be used until reprocessed.

• Sterilizers should be monitored at least weekly using a biological indicator and a matching control. (Using both a test and a control indicator from the same lot ensures that factors outside of the sterilization process have not affected the spores’ ability to be cultured.)

• The best indicator should be placed within an instrument pack and be sterilized with a normal load.

• The control indicator – which is not subjected to a sterilization cycle – should be incubated at the same time as the test indicator.

• If a test comes back positive, the proper troubleshooting procedures should be implemented. (For instructions on managing sterilization failures, visit the CDC website.)

• Sterilization records (mechanical, chemical, and biological) should be maintained in compliance with state and local regulations.

4. STORAGE & USE

• Store sterilized items in covered or closed cabinets.

• Examine all sterilized packs before opening for use to ensure the barrier wrap has not been compromised during storage.

Visit us online at Hu-Friedy.com for more infection prevention resources. Please see the other side for product re-order information.

For comprehensive guidelines, visit the CDC website at http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/rr/rr5217.pdf

Do you know if your office is following the proper infection prevention protocol? Please refer to the CDC guidelines at www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/rr/rr5217.pdf

How the best perform.
HU-FRIEDY INFECTION PREVENTION PRODUCTS

CLEANING AND CARE PRODUCTS

STERILIZATION PRODUCTS

STERILIZATION MONITORS

CHEMICAL INDICATORS

MONITOR MONITOR (5” CORD)

HANDE PRODUCTS

Implementing an infection prevention and instrument processing protocol that follows the CDC Guidelines can help you provide a safer and more comfortable environment for your staff and patients.

Use the instrument processing guidelines and infection prevention and protocol support that can be easily accessed for program compliance.

Your Hu-Friedy Representative is always available to help and answer any questions you may have. Call 1-800-Hu-Friedy or visit Hu-Friedy.com for more information.

*Please visit Hu-Friedy.com for our complete line of infection prevention products.