

REUSABLE NEEDLES: cleaning and sterilizing instructions

This document resumes few measures to take for cleaning and sterilizing your Spring Thread® needles.

In all case, please read carefully the instructions of your machines and consumables suppliers and use the standard ISO procedures and recommendations for cleaning and sterilizing your tools.

1. RINSING

Contaminated instruments should be cleaned as soon as possible.

Immediately after surgery, rinse the needles under warm running water. Rinse should remove all blood, body fluids and tissue.

2. PRE CLEANNG AND CLEANING

If not done immediately after rinsing, the needles should be submerged in a solution of water and neutral PH(7) detergent bath and allow soaking between 5 and 10 minutes.

Use a soft bristled brush and gently remove any visible soil still remaining on the device.

Lumens should be cleaned with a soft bristled pipe cleaner of corresponding width and length to ensure the entire lumen has been scrubbed

You may use ultrasonic cleaning, automatic washer sterilizer or manual cleaning

2.1. Ultrasonic Cleaning

- The needles should be processed in the cleaner for the full recommended cycle time (usually 5 to 10 minutes).
- Place the needles into the ultrasonic cleaner. They have to be fully submerged
- Do not place dissimilar metals (stainless, copper, chrome plated, etc.) in the same cleaning cycle.
- Change solution frequently – at least as often as manufacturer recommends.
- Rinse after ultrasonic cleaning with water to remove ultrasonic cleaning solution.

2.2. Automatic Washer Sterilizers

- Follow manufacturer's recommendations.

2.3. Manual Cleaning

Most instrument manufacturers recommend ultrasonic cleaning as the best and most effective way to clean surgical instruments, particularly those with hinges, locks and other moving parts. If ultra sonic cleaning is not available observe the following steps.

- Use stiff plastic cleaning brushes (nylon, etc.). Do not use steel wool or wire brushes
- Use only neutral PH(7) detergents because if not rinsed off properly, low PH detergents will cause breakdown of stainless protective surface and black staining. High PH detergent will cause surface deposit of brown stain, which will also interfere with smooth operation of the instrument.
- Brush the needles carefully and, if possible, handle them totally separate from general instruments.
- Make sure the surfaces are visibly clean and free from stains and tissue.
- After scrubbing, rinse thoroughly under running water.

3. AFTER CLEANING

If needles are to be stored, let them air dry and store them in a clean and dry environment.

4. STERILIZATION

- Sterilization should be performed in a medical grade instrument tray or disposable paper or plastic pouch.
- Make sure you use a wide enough pouch for the needles.
- Make certain that the instrument container is sealed in an appropriate packaging for sterilization.
- Sterilize in compliance with the local guidelines for hospital hygiene.
- Sterilization of instruments may be accomplished by Autoclave or Ethylene Oxide.

Time and temperature parameters required for sterilization vary according to type of sterilizer, cycle design, and packaging material.

Autoclave Sterilization

- Testing should be conducted by each healthcare facility to ensure that the configuration of the needles is acceptable for the sterilization process.
- Do not sterilize instruments at temperatures over 141°C (285°F).
- All devices shall be positioned to allow steam contact of all surfaces.
- Always verify parameters with sterilizer manufacturer's written instructions.
- Do not overload the autoclave chamber as pockets may form that do not permit steam penetration.

Storage

After sterilization, needles should remain in sterilization wrap and be stored in a clean and dry environment. The devices are manufactured from non-degradable materials. When stored under the recommended conditions, the shelf life is not limited.

If needles are to be reused or autoclaved : put them up for autoclaving either individually or in sets.

- Disposable paper or plastic pouches are ideal. Make sure you use a wide enough pouch for the needles.
- Place towel on bottom of pan to absorb excess moisture during autoclaving. This will reduce the chances of getting "Wet packs". Make sure the towels used in sterilization of instruments have no detergent residue and are neutral – PH(7) if immersed in water. This can be a real problem as laundries frequently use inexpensive but high PH(9-13) detergents and do not properly rinse out or neutralize those detergents in the final wash/rinse cycle.
- At the end of the autoclave cycle – before the drying cycle – unlock autoclave door and open it more than a crack. Then run dry cycle for the period recommended by the autoclave manufacturer. If the autoclave door is opened fully before the drying cycle, cold room air will rush into the chamber, causing condensation on the instruments. This will result in water stains on instruments and also cause wet packs.

5. COLD STERILIZATION

Most cold sterilization solutions render instruments sterile only after a 10 hour immersion.

This prolonged chemical action can be more detrimental to the surgical instruments than the usual 20 minute autoclave cycle. If the instruments need to be "disinfected" only, cold sterilization is okay as disinfection will take in only 10 minutes. But keep in mind the difference between:

STERILE – an absolute term (no living organism survives)

And

DISINFECTED – basically clean.

Always use the proper sterilization/cleaning technique to render the needles in required condition for use.

Important note:

All products are guaranteed to be free from defects in material and workmanship at the time of shipping. All of our products are designed and manufactured to meet the highest quality standards. We cannot accept liability for failure of products which have been modified in any way from their originals.