(A) Policy Statement

Sterilized articles should be handled with great care and as little as possible. They should be stored in a well-ventilated area with controlled temperature and humidity (temperature of area 65° - 72° F or 18° - 22° C, relative humidity between 20-60%).

(B) Purpose of Policy

To reduce hazard of infection for OR patients, and to reduce loss of inventory due to inadvertent contamination.

(C) Procedure

1. Movement of sterile supplies within the OR suite will follow a well delineated traffic pattern.
2. Closed cabinet storage is preferred. If open storage is used it must be 8-10 inches from the floor, and 18 inches from the ceiling.
3. Sterile supplies are stored on separate shelves from clean non-sterile supplies.
4. Storage conditions are maintained to minimize dust, moisture, and contamination.
5. All wrapped sterilized items must be allowed to cool completely on an open sterilizer rack before handling.
6. Any sterilized package that is torn, dropped, or comes into contact with moisture, is considered contaminated.

It is the responsibility of the reader to verify with the responsible agent that this is the most current version of the policy.