

STERILE PROCESSING PROCEDURE DECONTAMINATION

Procedure SP2-2: Decontamination of surgical instruments



Policy Number Superseded:

Responsibility: Operations Manager,
Sterile Processing

Effective Date:
December 2025

Purpose of Procedure: To provide properly
cleaned and processed instruments and
equipment for use in the hospital and clinics.

Initial Effective Date:
1987

Procedure:

All instruments and reusable patient care equipment received into the decontamination area of sterile processing and the OR will be considered contaminated and must be processed by sterile processing in a specific manner.

- (A) Items will be received into decontamination according to SPD Procedure SP2-1.
- (B) Proper attire in the sterile processing decontamination area will be:
 - (1) Head cover.
 - (2) Shoe covers are recommended to keep shoes clean and to prevent slipping on the wet floor.
 - (3) Plastic or latex rubber gloves.
 - (4) Goggles or face shields.
 - (5) Facemask.
 - (6) Cover gown/plastic apron.
 - (7) Surgical scrub suit.
- (C) Decontaminating/disinfecting by the case.
 - (1) Each case should be reprocessed completely and on its own before reprocessing items from other cases.
 - (2) Instruments to be sent through the washer/disinfector.

(D) Surgical instruments.

- (1) Surgical Instrument sets received into the decontamination area of sterile processing and the OR.
- (2) Manufacturer guidelines for all instruments will be followed.
- (3) Separate instruments by type, keeping the set together.
- (4) Open all box locks and neatly array instruments, keeping sharp instruments separate from non-sharp instruments.
- (5) Place the same color marker with coordinating number in multi-tray sets and from the same case.
- (6) Visible soil is removed by soaking instruments in a pre-mixed detergent solution.
- (7) Brushing and flushing under the water level.
- (8) Place the instruments in the ultrasonic washer when and where possible.
- (9) Some items will require manual cleaning using an instrument brush and/or washcloth.
- (10) Cleaned instruments are rinsed with tap water making sure all visible soil has been removed.
- (11) Lumen instruments must be cleaned using a small brush then flushed using a detergent solution pump or syringe, filled first with detergent solution and then tap water.
- (12) All hand-washed items must be washed holding the instruments underwater and brushing away from the body to prevent aerosolization of contaminated fluids.
- (13) Instruments able to withstand high temperatures will be run through a washer/disinfector, otherwise hand-washed instruments may be sent through to the prep and pack (clean) room for final inspection and setup.
- (14) If an instrument is found to have visible contaminants during inspection, the entire set will be sent back through to decontamination and reprocessed.

(E) Hand-washed instruments.

Some items are not designed to be sent through the washer/disinfectors per IFU (instruction for use).

All manufactures instructions will be followed per the hand-washing protocol on the IFU.

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1987

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Operations Supervisor, Sterile Processing

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