

IACUC Guidelines

Instrument Cleaning, Packing and Sterilization

IACUC Approved: November 13, 2017

PURPOSE: To ensure sterile instruments are available for surgical procedures. (Contact OLAC for additional sterilization procedures for instruments that may contain prions.)

DESCRIPTION

1.0 Persons Responsible

- 1.1 Animal Technician
- 1.2 Laboratory Personnel

2.0 Frequency

- 2.1 As needed

3.0 Documentation

- 3.1 Date on autoclave tape on packs

4.0 Materials Required

- 4.1 Instrument cleanser, brush, stainless soak bowls
- 4.2 Instrument Lubricant (instrument milk)
- 4.3 Soft cloth for drying instruments
- 4.4 Cloth wraps, stainless steel trays, sterilization indicators, autoclave tape
- 4.5 Quick-seal autoclave bags
- 4.6 Autoclave

5.0 Procedure - Cleaning Instruments

- 5.1 At the end of the surgical procedure, remove any sharps (needles, scalpel blades, suture needles). Make sure all sharps have been accounted for.
- 5.2 Separate small, fine instruments from other instruments and place in separate stainless soak bowls. Fill bowl with warm water and add a measured amount (usually one scoop) of instrument detergent. Avoid mixing chrome plated carbon steel instruments with stainless steel instruments.
- 5.3 Unlock ratchets and keep box locks open. Let instruments soak for at least fifteen minutes.
- 5.4 Take one instrument at a time. Using a brush scrub the working end of the instrument first using brisk strokes until all blood and tissue debris are removed; then scrub the rest of the instrument.

- 5.5 Rinse instruments twice under running water (use distilled or ionized water if available) to prevent dissolved or suspended solids from remaining on the surfaces.
- 5.6 Inspect the instruments for damage and wear. Replace as needed. Once a month or every four uses, lubricate the instruments by soaking them in instrument lubricant (instrument milk) for thirty to forty-five seconds with their lock boxes open. Dilute the lubricant in distilled water as directed by the manufacturer. Open and close instruments in the lubricant until smooth action is regained. Problem instruments may be left in the lubricant overnight. After lubrication instruments are ready for autoclaving; no wiping or rinsing is necessary. If they are to be stored before autoclaving, wipe them down lightly with a soft cloth.

6.0 Preparing and Autoclaving a Surgical Pack

- 6.0 Place the instruments on a clean, dry hand towel. When finished cleaning, dry each instrument using an additional hand towel, and place them on an instrument tray.
- 6.1 Open locks and ratchets and arrange the instruments on a towel-lined instrument tray.
- 6.2 Preparing an instrument tray.
 - 6.2.1 Using a clean instrument tray, place a hand towel or surgical drape on the tray.
 - 6.2.2 Wrap the instruments in towel or drape and close with a piece of autoclave indicator tape. Wrap with a second hand towel or surgical drape and seal double wrapped instruments with autoclave tape.
 - 6.2.3 Write the date autoclaved, the type of pack and your initials on the tape.
- 6.3 Items for rodent surgery can also be autoclaved in a quick seal autoclave bag.
 - 6.3.1 Wrap the instruments in a large piece of disposable drape.
 - 6.3.2 Seal the autoclave bag with a piece of autoclave tape. Write the date autoclaved, the type of pack and your initials on the tape.

6.4 Autoclave wrapped items at 250° F at 15-20 psi for 30 to 35 minutes

- 6.5 A single pack may be used on a series of rodents as long as aseptic technique is not violated. If a minor break in aseptic technique occurs the contaminated instrument will be set aside or re-sterilized in a glass bead sterilizer. If a major break of aseptic technique occurs, a new pack will be opened and used.
- 6.6 Most surgical packs can be heat sterilized prior to using them for surgery, if an instrument cannot be heat sterilized it can also be gas sterilized.

7.0 Storage of Surgery Packs

- 7.1 Packs wrapped in a single outer wrap have a shelf life of thirty days. If a pack's sterility expires, it must be re-labeled and re-sterilized.
- 7.2 Packs wrapped in a double outer wrap have a shelf life of three months. If a pack's sterility expires, it must be re-labeled and re-sterilized.
- 7.3 Individual quick-seal autoclave bags have a shelf life of three months. If a pack's sterility expires, it must be re-labeled and re-sterilized.