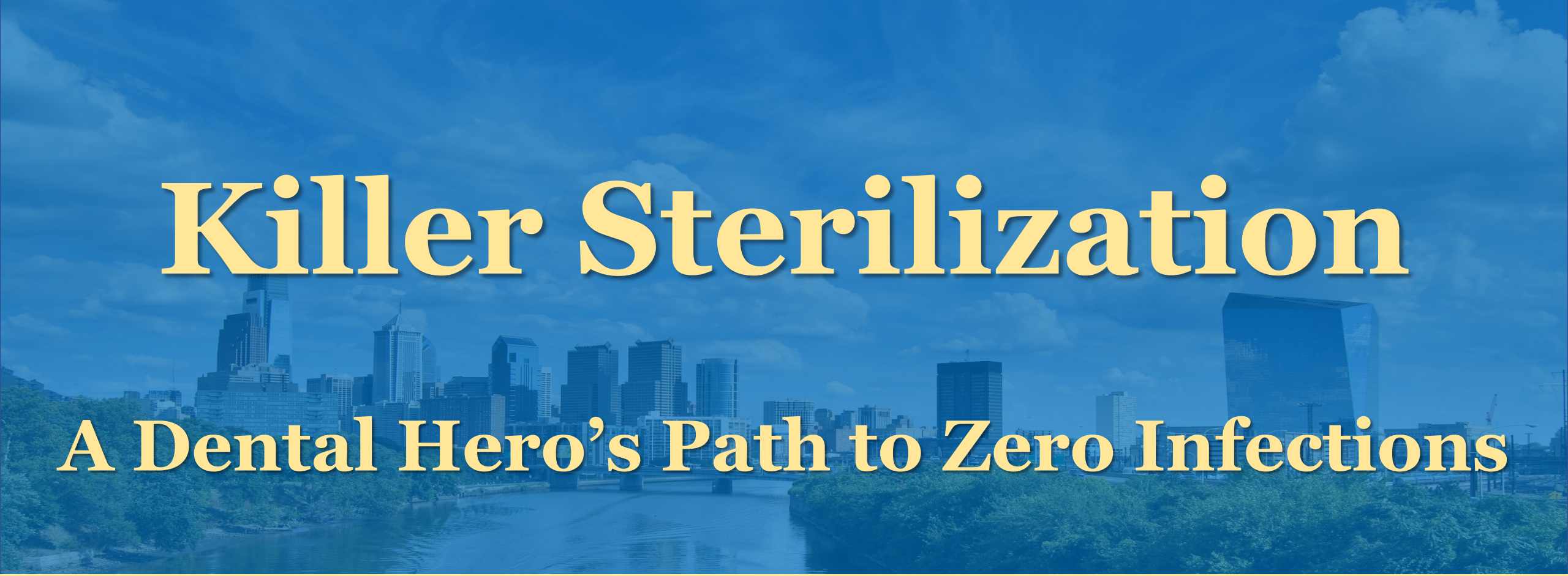

Killer Sterilization

A Dental Hero's Path to Zero Infections

Presenter: Charlotte Gallagher, BSN, RN, RDH, CDIPC

Healthcare-Associated Infections Antimicrobial Resistance (HAI/AR) Program

Objectives

- Identify characteristics of a well-organized reprocessing and sterilization area
- Explain the flow of tasks from safe transport to effective sterilization and storage
- Highlight the importance of equipment monitoring and maintenance per manufacturer's instructions for use (MIFU) and quality assurance guidelines

BE ORGANIZED

Reprocessing Area

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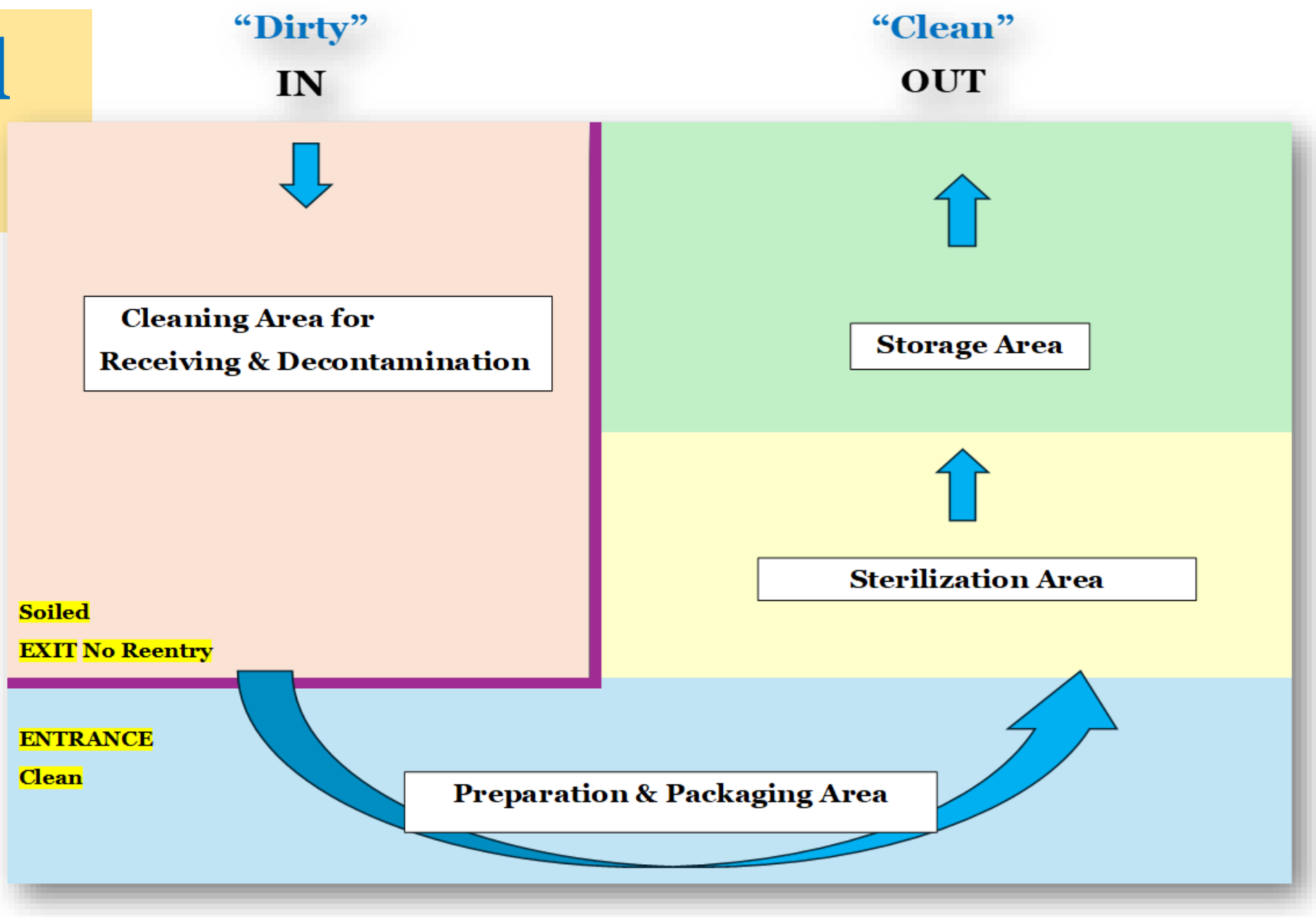
Separate & One Way: Area Workflow

- ✓ Designated for reprocessing & sterilization tasks only
- ✓ One way flow: soiled to clean & clean to sterile
- ✓ Clearly define spaces with signage to help prevent contamination of clean/sterile processing areas
- ✓ 4 Distinct Areas:
  - ➢ Receiving-decontamination-cleaning (rinsing/drying)
  - ➢ Preparation-packaging
  - ➢ Sterilization
  - ➢ Storage

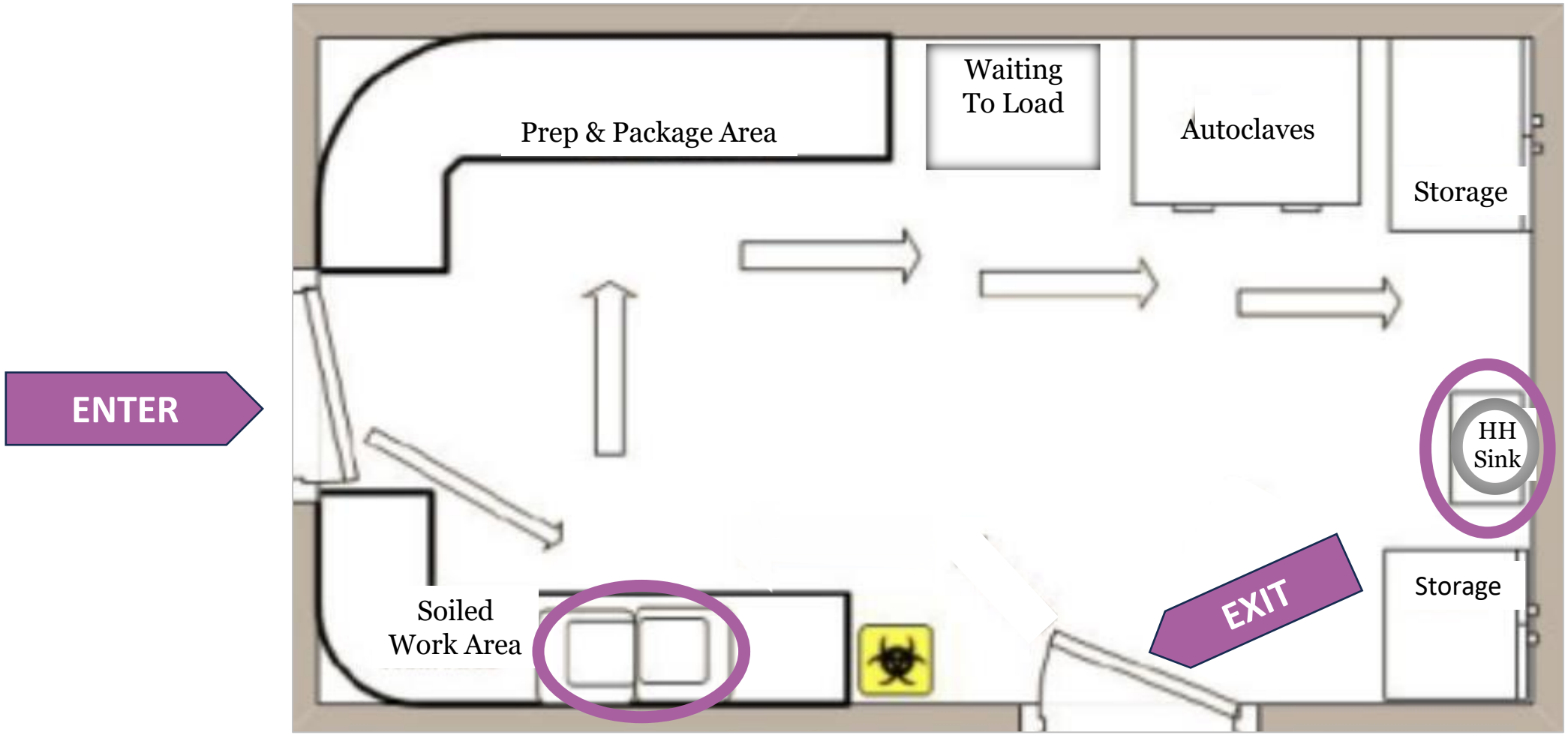
https://youtu.be/yyeKn-M4mhE
RR5217 Dental Front.pmd (cdc.gov)
Guidelines for infection control in dental health-care settings - 2003 (cdc.gov)

The Ideal Area



RR5217 Dental Front.pmd (cdc.gov)

Office-based Sterilization



Clear Flow & Signage Choices

Is Your Sterilization Room Compliant? A CDC Inspector Weighs In (youtube.com

Amazon.com: Marketing Holders)

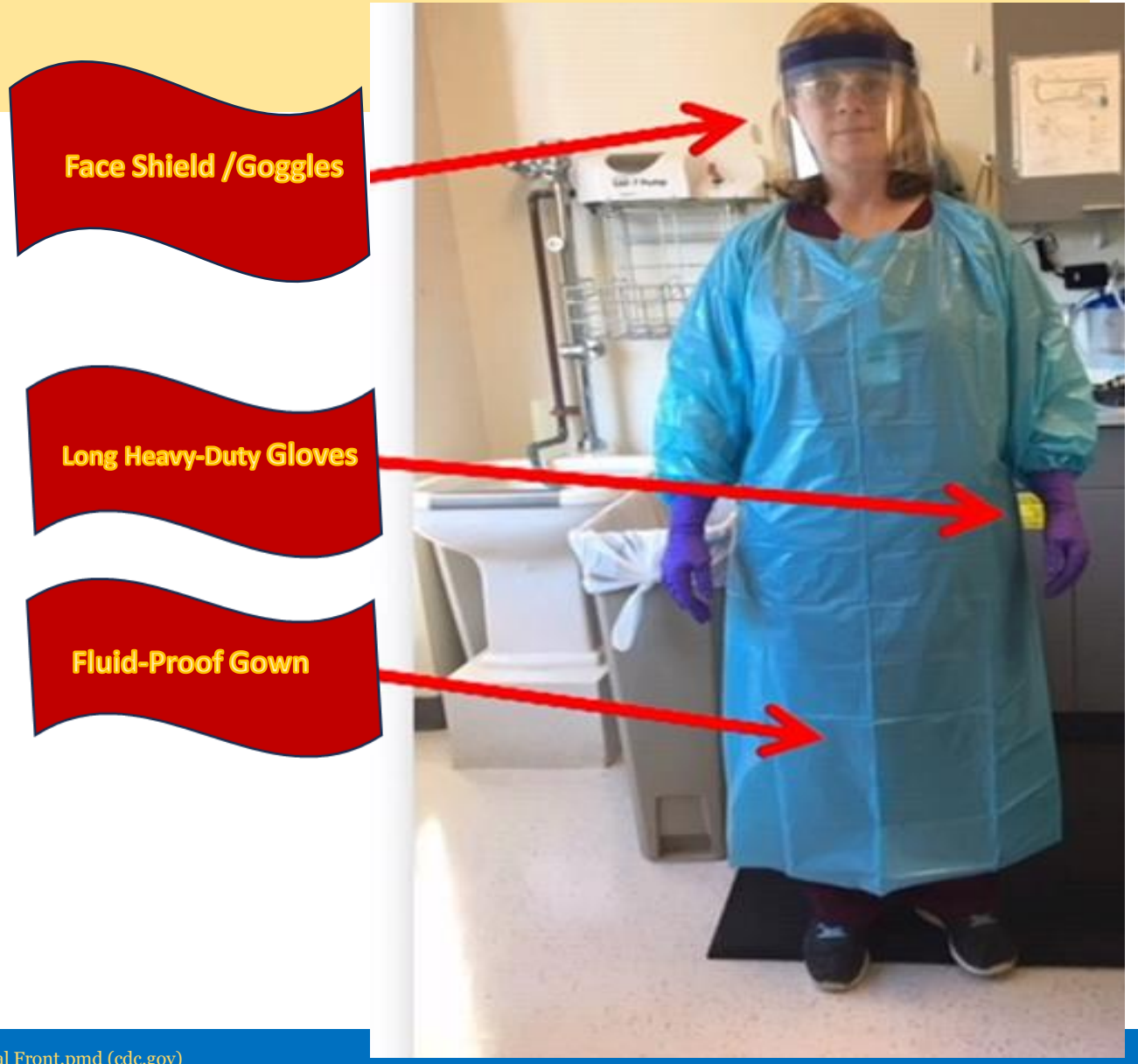
Keep Readily Available

- Hand hygiene (HH) supplies
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Measuring devices to dilute cleaners
- Clean towels
- Chemical Safety Data Sheets, logs, and/or MIFU for materials, instruments, & equipment
  - Contact manufacturers for directions, if clarification needed

Selected EPA-Registered Disinfectants | US EPA
Guidelines for infection control in dental health-care settings - 2003 (cdc.gov)

PPE

- DON PPE for chemical and biohazardous splash & sharps exposures
  - ✓Heavy duty, puncture proof, utility gloves
  - ✓Face shield/sided goggles
  - ✓Fluid resistant gown
  - ✓Mask



RR5217 Dental Front.pmd (cdc.gov)
spiceducation | Instrument Reprocessing: High Level Disi... | Module 4 (talentlms.com)

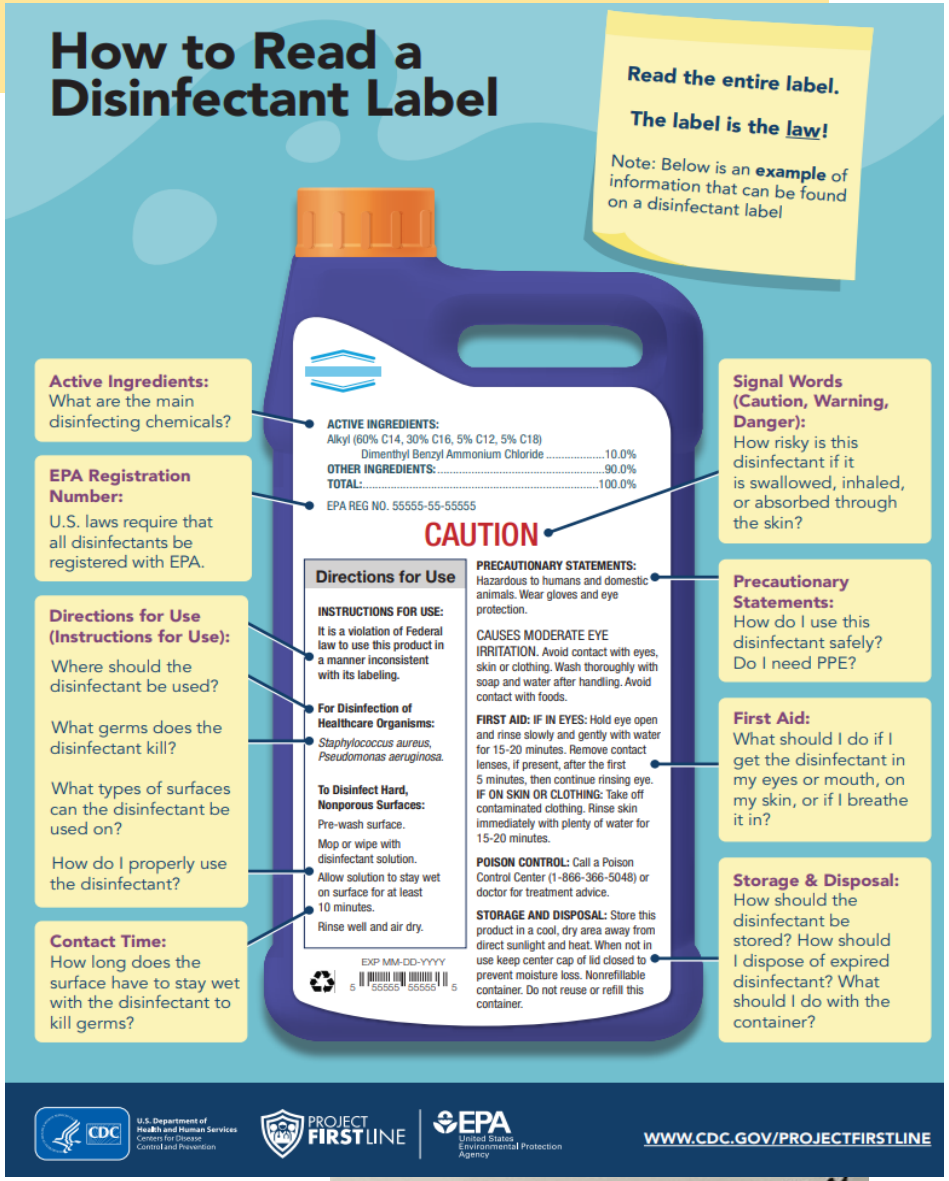
Environmental Safety Requirements

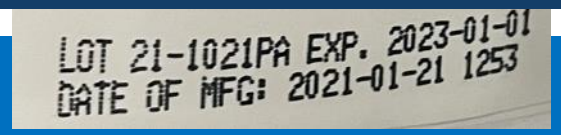
- Required safety equipment for chemical and bloodborne pathogen (BBP) exposure:
  - ✓ **Spill kit** for blood and chemicals
  - ✓ **Eye wash station** or portable eye wash bottles:
    30 feet/10 second walk from potential exposure
    Delivers 15 minute flush
    Perform and log weekly flush checks
    - ➢ ***Weekly Eyewash Inspection Sheet_04062022 (nih.gov)***
    - ➢ ***Eyewash INFO SHEET by OSHA3818.pdf***
- Room Air (if able)
  - ✓ Exchanges 6-10 /hour
  - ✓ Temperature 64° F to 72° F (18°to 22° C)
  - ✓ Humidity 34-79%

OSHA3818.pdf
Guidelines for infection control in dental health-care settings - 2003 (cdc.gov)

Cleaning Products & Logs

- **Unexpired EPA registered cleaning products**
  - Surface compatible cleaners and disinfectant sprays or wipes (effective wet time for tuberculocidal)
  - Write open and discard/expiration dates
- **Logs**
  - ALL Equipment monitoring & maintenance per MIFU **(ultrasonic, washer, sterilizer)**
  - Sterilizer log documents
    - Date, load contents, sterilizer, operator
    - Mechanical, chemical and biological indicator results
  - Sharps injuries for bloodborne pathogen (BBP) exposure





How to Read a Disinfectant Label (cdc.gov)
Guidelines for infection control in dental health-care settings - 2003 (cdc.gov)

CLEANING

Soiled Instrument Handling

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Exam Room Prep for Transport

Single-use Symbol
Do Not Use Twice

Prepare instruments for transport to decontamination

- ❑ Discard single use items, sharps, and hazardous waste
- ❑ Point of Use Cleaning: wipe tips **during** treatment with moistened 2x2 gauze or sponge to reduce drying of blood & gross debris

Summary of Infection Prevention Practices in Dental Settings: Basic Expectations for Safe Care (cdc.gov)
RR5217 Dental Front.pmd (cdc.gov)
Guidelines for infection control in dental health-care settings - 2003 (cdc.gov)

Equipment: Flush Then Disassemble

- Flush equipment and tubing with air/water for minimum 20- 30 sec.
  - Air/water syringe
  - Handpieces & Cavitron lines
- Disconnect & disassemble per MIFU
- **Heat sterilize dental handpieces**
  - Saliva/blood are retracted onto internal surfaces and can be transmitted to subsequent patients
  - Remove entire unit & separate tip and motor attachment
  - CDC Statement on Reprocessing Dental Handpieces

Summary of Infection Prevention Practices in Dental Settings: Basic Expectations for Safe Care (cdc.gov)
https://www.fda.gov/downloads/MedicalDevices/DeviceRegulationandGuidance/GuidanceDocuments/UCM253010.pdf
Guidelines for infection control in dental health-care settings - 2003 (cdc.gov)
CDC Statement on Reprocessing Dental Handpieces | CDC Archive

Transport to Reprocessing Area

- Per OSHA, instruments should be transported to reprocessing area in a covered, leakproof, puncture-resistant container labeled biohazard
- Don't transport LIQUIDS

*TIP: Place instruments directly into ultrasonic baskets prior to transporting to reduce handling risks when transporting, cleaning and rinsing

Medline Biohazard Transport Container (youtube.com)

Stainless Steel Ultrasonic Cleaner Mesh Basket (esslinger.com)

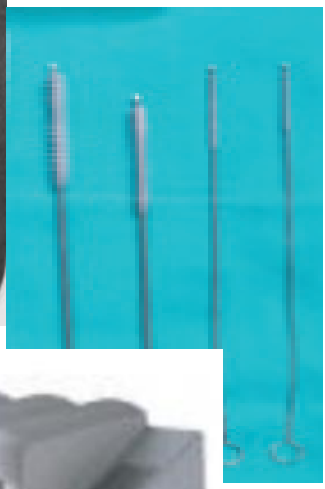
Preclean: Prevent Drying of Debris

In receiving area, preclean/presoak to keep debris moist **IF** unable to start cleaning immediately:

- Submerge items in dedicated “dirty” holding container of detergent solution or liberally spray on gel
- Prevents debris hardening that hinders cleaning and steam contact

Cleaning

1. Unlock and open hinged devices (scissors, forceps, pliers)
2. Handle hard-to-reach items with pliers or forceps
3. Irrigate lumens with air via syringe, MIFU recommended brush, or commercial flush and lubrication devices
4. **Clean ALL instruments via automated or manual method, per MIFU**



HANDPEICE CLEANING LUBRICATION SYSTEM

Cleaning Methods

- **Ultrasonic cleaner**
- **Washer/disinfector**
- **Manual scrubbing**
  - Automated methods **always** preferred over manual scrubbing
    - Minimizes risk of sharps injury during handling
  - For each instrument, follow MIFU for cleaning method compatibility
  - All instruments should be heat tolerant

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Guidelines for infection control in dental health-care settings - 2003 (cdc.gov)

Ultrasonic Cleaner

Vibrations form cavitation bubbles that dislodge debris

1. Unlock & open hinged devices
2. Insert instruments into basket
   - ❑ Don't overload
3. Entirely **Submerge** load in unit's suggested detergent
4. Put **lid on** to prevent contamination of surfaces with aerosols or droplets
5. Set timer for when instruments should be clean, per MIFU (usually 15-30 minutes)

Summary of Infection Prevention Practices in Dental Settings: Basic Expectations for Safe Care (cdc.gov)
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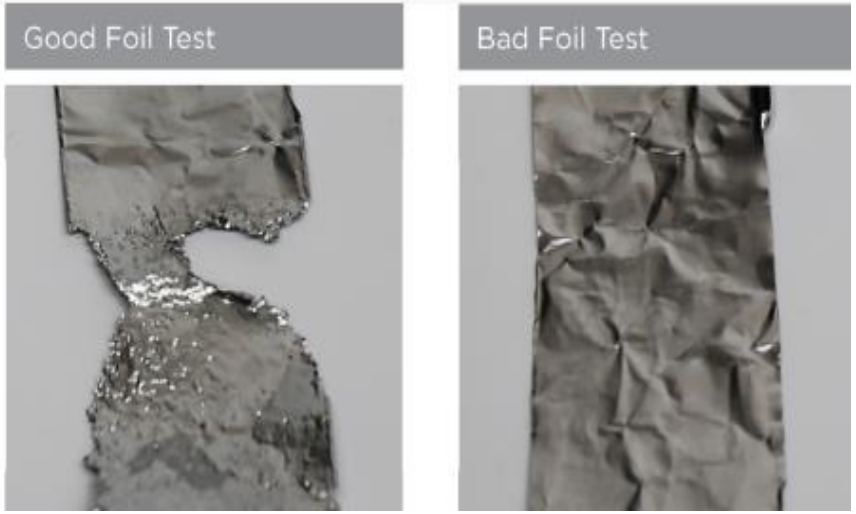
Ultrasonic Cavitation Testing & Documentation

- ❑Fill detergent AM, empty & dry PM, and if cloudy or odorous
- ❑Use commercial test strips and/or foil tests for acceptable detergent and cavitation parameters per MIFU
- ❑Commercial devices can test temperature and strength of cavitation & detergent
- ❑Document monitoring results



Examples:

Cavitation

- ❑Testing the performance and quality of your ultrasonic cleaner - foil test
- ❑Resurge: Dental Ultrasonic Cleaner

Test Log

- ❑ 704_N1656_Ultrasonic Cleaning Monitor Record Sheet_0316.indd

Resurge: Dental Ultrasonic Cleaner | Dentsply Sirona USA
2024 OSAP Dental Infection Control Boot Camp
Guidelines for infection control in dental health-care settings - 2003 (cdc.gov)

Rinsing Following Ultrasonic Cleaning

1. At cycle completion, remove lid & transport to sink by basket handles
2. **Thoroughly rinse off** detergent with tap water in a disinfected sink
3. Retrieve sharps from basket with utility gloves or forceps
4. Transport items safely to drying area

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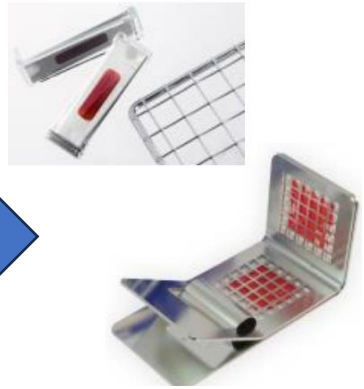
Automatic Washers

- Washer-sterilizers offer the highest level of disinfection & drying stage saves time

1. Load and maintain per MIFUs
2. Allow a complete drying cycle if unit provides
3. Perform daily and periodic maintenance per MIFU's and document all findings

Example: VERIFY All Clean Test Washer Indicator | STERIS



Manual Scrubbing

1. Scrub 2-3 items with long handled brush and detergent, under water (80-110°F), down-away motion
2. Replace brush daily or if damaged (soft toothbrush)
3. Never reach into sinks or containers holding sharp instruments that cannot be seen, such as a container of soapy water
4. Use pliers or forceps for hard-to-reach items.
5. Rinse items **thoroughly** with tap water

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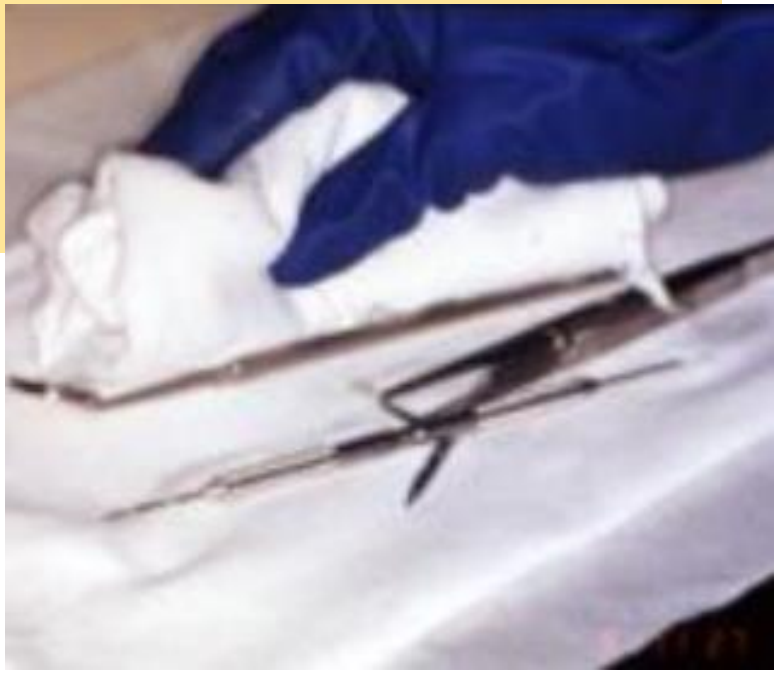
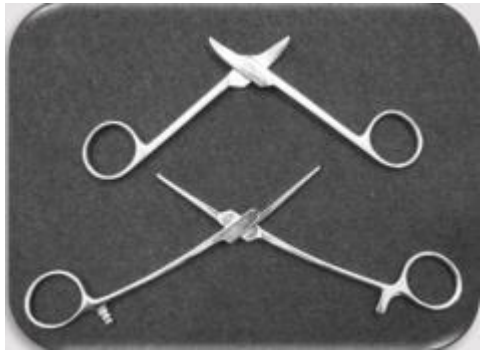
Final Cleaning Step: Dry Completely



- **Prevent wet packs and corrosion & allow complete steam contact**

1. Place wet items on absorbent pad or towel in a dedicated clean space (3 feet from splash zone)
   - ❑ Leave air dry or carefully pat with clean, lint-free towels
   - ❑ Flush lumen/hollow devices with air via empty syringe, per MIFU (e.g., air water syringes)
2. If space allows, use rigid bin to transport to prep and packaging for inspection



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Keep Limited Space Clean

- **Keep cleaned instruments 3 ft from sink "Splash Zone"**
- **Limited Space:**
  - ❑ Do not perform decontamination and clean tasks (e.g., drying and packaging) at the same time
  - ❑ Disinfect shared surfaces between dirty and clean tasks (sinks, countertops, containers)
  - ❑ Use clean surface barriers (pads)
  - ❑ Use splash guards

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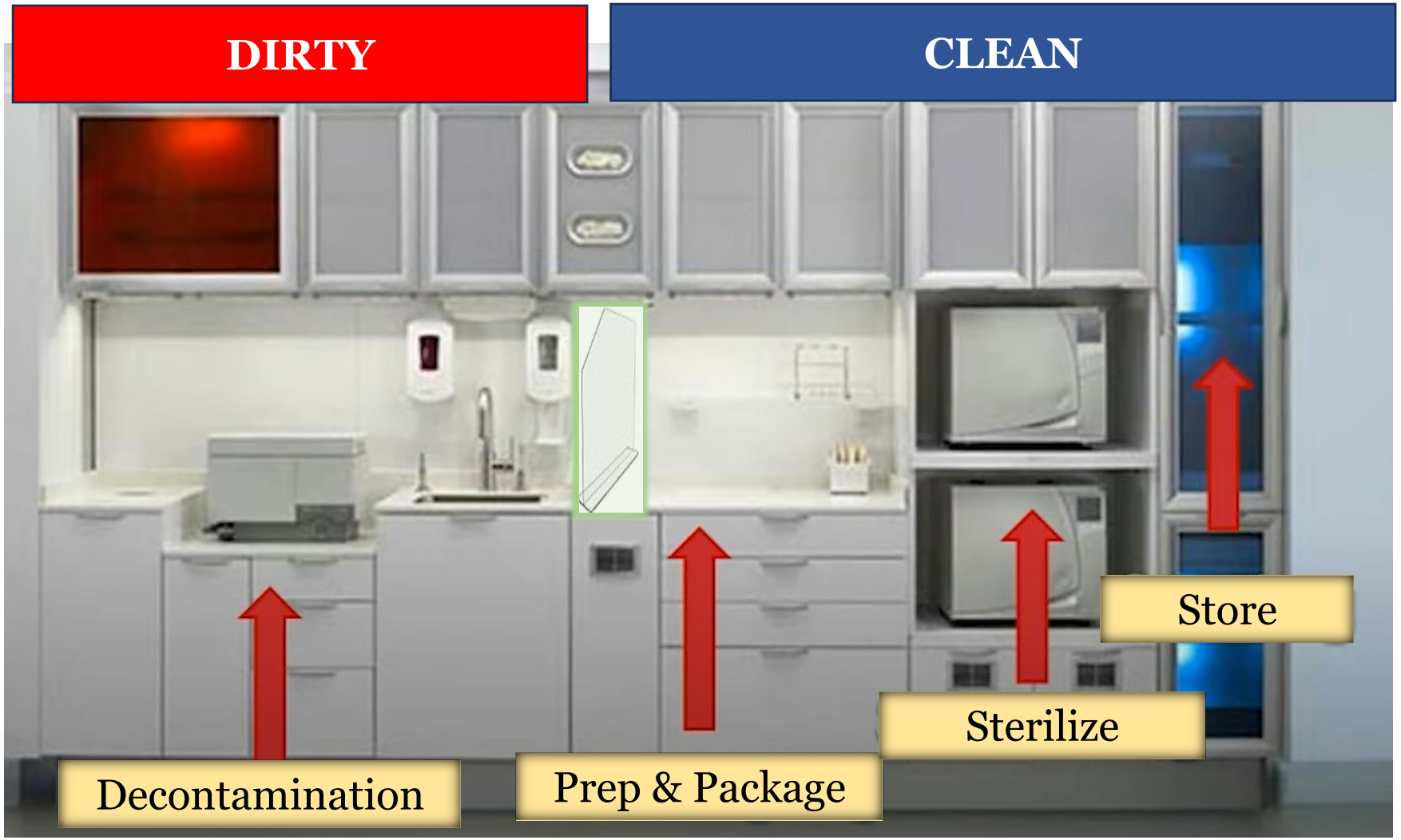
A Solution Separate Limited Space



Is Your Sterilization Room Compliant? A CDC Inspector Weighs In (youtube.com

Wrap-Up Dirty Duties

1. Disinfect transport container, countertops & sink
2. Remove PPE before exiting "dirty" area
    - **Discard** disposable PPE
    - **Disinfect** reusable PPE: utility gloves, shields /goggles
3. Launder reusable gowns & towels
    - **Don't** enter clean areas **OR** reuse soiled PPE for any patient care
    - **Do** always perform HH after any PPE is doffed

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Preparation & Packaging

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Preparation

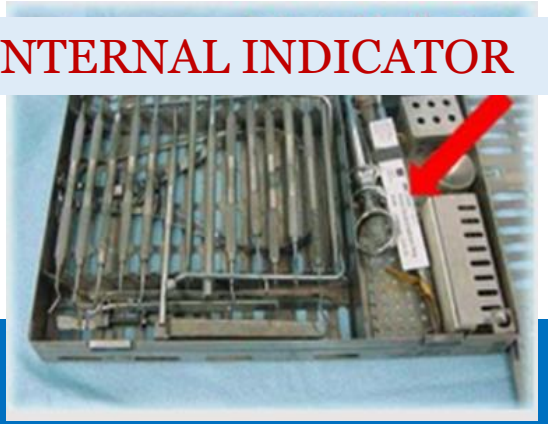
1. Ensure prep/package area is clean/disinfected/dry
2. Perform HH & DON clean utility gloves
3. Use good light & magnification lens
4. Inspect for debris, damage
    - Return soiled for recleaning
    - Remove if rusted, pitted, over sharpened blades, broken tips; replace to complete sets
5. Assemble **functional** group setups
6. Lubricate and apply rust inhibitors on hinges or handpieces, per MIFU
    - Remove excess using a clean cloth

LUMAPRO LED, 1.75x, Round Magnifier Light - 10C906|10C906 - Grainger

Add Chemical Indicators

- See through pouches with built in internal/external chemical indicators (CI) are ideal to view items and open without contaminating contents
- Cassettes require inserting CI strips internally before sealing
- CI tape is used externally when internal CI is not visible
- CI's measure time/temp/pressure ->color change only visible when parameters have been met
- Only biological indicators verify sterility: spore test is performed weekly & placed in center of full load

External & Internal Indicators



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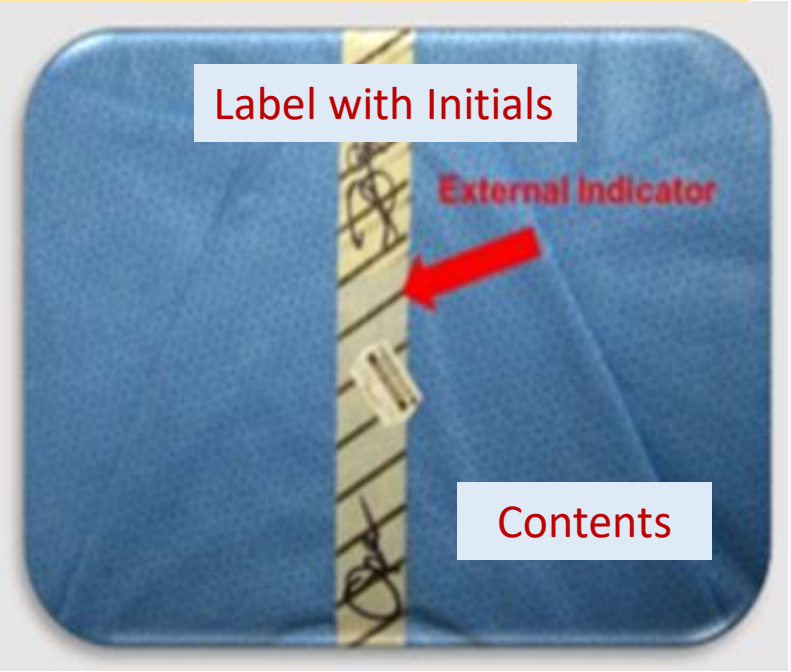
Labeling



Label peel pouches or cassette wraps with:

- Load#, sterilizer#, date & expiration date and contents, if applicable
- Packager's initials- captures process or operator errors
- Allows for retrieval and reeducation in sterilizer failure

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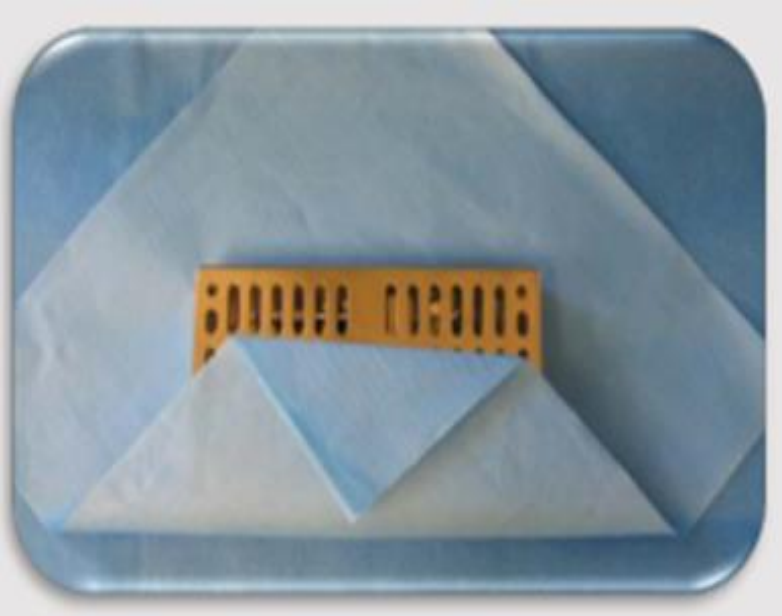
Packaging

- Adequately sized, clean, dry, intact peel pouches or wraps as it will protect sterility during storage
  - ❖ Tears are created when over filled - get bigger packages or pack less
- Don’t over fold, gap, or crease at adhesive seals
- Place clean packages in designated clean container marked **“Clean NOT Sterile”** to prevent reuse or begin loading sterilizer trays



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STERILIZATION

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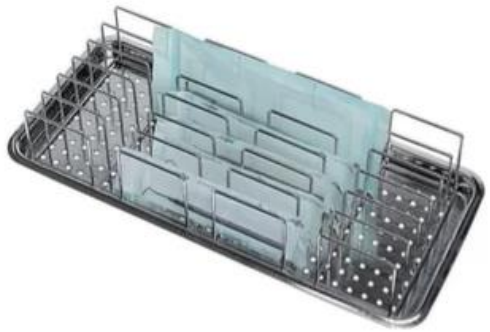
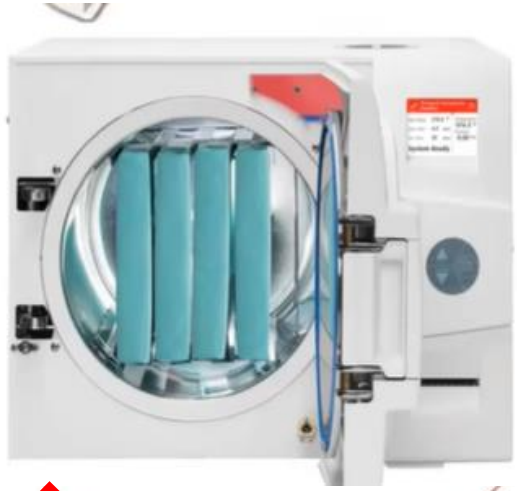
Loading

- Place packages on trays, per MIFU
  - **Overloading** causes ineffective sterilization & drying
  - Adequate space allows steam contact and complete drying of instruments
- Paper up or down on flat trays per MIFU's - no stacking **(wet packs)**
- Best on side





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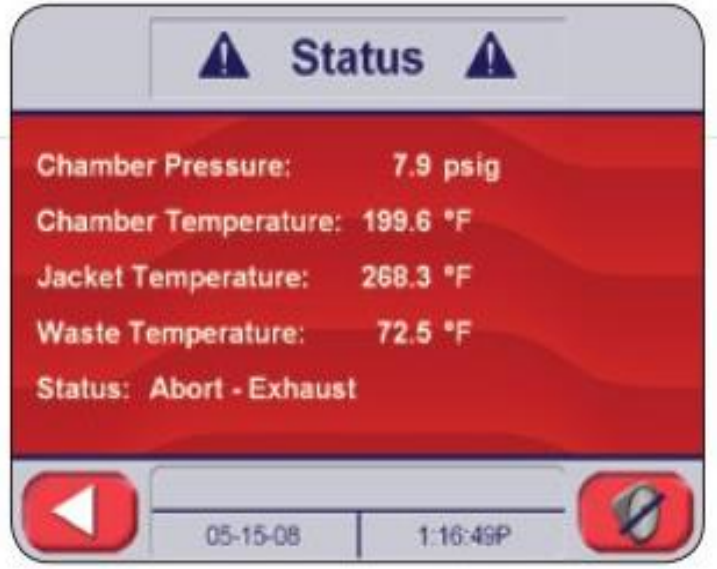
Turn On the Heat!

1. Follow MIFU for time, temp, and pressure parameters, correct use of cassettes, wraps, and chemical or biological indicators
2. Ensure door seal is in place and lock door
3. Select and run sterilizer cycle (Time/Temp/Pressure) **per load contents, per MIFU**



Monitor Mechanical Indicators

1. Monitor: time, temp, pressure readings
2. **If they fail: Do not use instruments**
   - ❑ Review all processes for operator error & rerun items to check if parameters were met
   - ❑ First sign of equipment/load failure
   - ❑ Service malfunction early prior to complete unit breakdown or eventual biological indicator (BI)/spore test failure

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Drying, Cooling, & Inspecting

1. **LET CYCLE COMPLETE** drying and **cooling** to avoid condensation from hot pack on cool counter/trays
2. **LEAVE DOOR CLOSED UNLESS STATED OTHERWISE IN MIFU**
3. Open sterilizer after cycle end light or alarm signal
4. Remove packages for storage with clean hands or gloves
5. **Inspect CI for color change** before storage
   - In pouch (if visible) or external indicator/tape

Wet Packs in Table-Top Autoclaves: A Common and Preventable Problem | Tuttnauer
Summary of Infection Prevention Practices in Dental Settings: Basic Expectations for Safe Care (cdc.gov)
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Document

Maintain up-to-date sterilizer log:

1. Mechanical & CI monitoring **each load**
2. Weekly BI/spore test
   - ✓**One BI test is placed in center of a load in each sterilizer**
3. Document daily preventative maintenance per MIFU
   - ✓Check drain/filter/gaskets (daily) & Bowie-Dick air removal test
4. All contracted scheduled maintenance and emergency repairs

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Document

Sterilization Log Sheet
Month/Year:_____

Location:_____
Sterilizer Identification:_____

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Date (dd/mm/yy)	Contents	Cycle Start Time	Cycle End Time	Cycle Length	Temp. °F or °C	Pressure	Internal/ External Chemical Indicator Color Change (Y/N)	Biological Indicator Used (Y/N)/ Result (pass/fail)	Operator's Initials	Comments
							/	/		

Biological spore test strips are submitted weekly

Summary of Infection Prevention Practices in Dental Settings: Basic Expectations for Safe Care (cdc.gov)
hip.phila.gov/document/1625/SterilizationLog_Logo_April2019_X7SzC9G.pdf/

Rules for Unpackaged Items

- Emergency only!
- Not for reasons of convenience, alternative to buying additional instrument sets, or saving time or packaging costs
- Ensure there are enough sterile instruments available to discourage the need for a quick turn around
- **Packaging acts as barrier to maintain sterility**

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Warning for “Cold Sterile”

Liquid sterilization is discouraged

Evaluate: exposure risks outweigh any benefits

- ❖No BI test to ensure sterility
- ❖Requires expensive copious sterile water rinsing
- ❖Overall, cost effective to replace instruments with disposable or heat tolerant items

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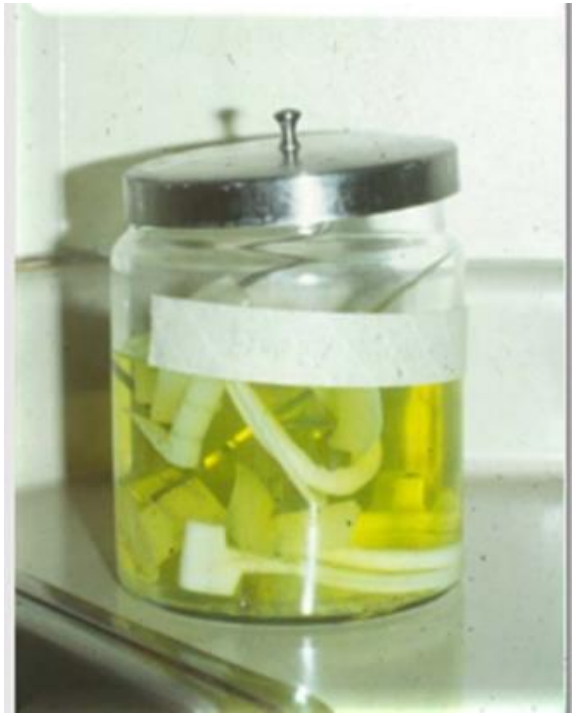
More on “Cold Sterile”

If you must:

- Safety Data Sheet Regulations must be followed precisely & documented
  - Monitoring effectiveness: Dilution, immersion time, effective strength, temperature
  - Safety precautions for using as chemical sterilant or high-level disinfectant
    - Inhalation, splash & contact PPE: Respirator, heavy-duty gloves, gown & goggles/face shields
    - Minimum 10 air exchanges per hour or exhaust hood
    - Disposal



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STORAGE

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Never Store or Use

FAILED INDICATORS, TORN, STAINED, OR WET PACKS

Wet packs compromise sterility

- Water pulls hand/surface contaminants through wet pack micropores = wicking

Inspect for teaching moments:

- Wet packs, CI, BI, load failures from errors loading/packaging

❖**NO FANS!**

Storage Area

- Keep packages in a **clean, dry, enclosed area,** away from sources of contamination (aerosol, droplet, water, windows, direct sunlight)
- Sterile storage: maintain temperature <75°F relative humidity < 70%
- Store in a manner that prevents packages from being crushed, bent, compressed or punctured
- Rotate packaged instruments; first in first out

Sterilization Guidelines: Third Edition | International Committee of the Red Cross (icrc.org)
Instrument Reprocessing – From Dirty to Clean (youtube.com)
Summary of Infection Prevention Practices in Dental Settings: Basic Expectations for Safe Care (cdc.gov)
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Dispensing Sterile Instrument Packs

1. Maintain **integrity:** handle packages from storage with **clean hands**
2. Inspect expiration before use
   - "Expired by Status" = shelf life determined by instrument package
   - Wet, stained, torn, damaged, previously opened: reclean, repackage, and resterilize
   - Dropped pack rule - if package cracks (torn, ripped) take it back (reprocess)
3. Do not open sterile packaging until ready for actual use with patient observing

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Spore Testing

Biological Indicators

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Spore Testing Options

In-office spore testing

- ✓Requires incubator purchase
- ✓Quicker result turnaround–usually @ 48 hours
- ✓Follow MIFU timelines

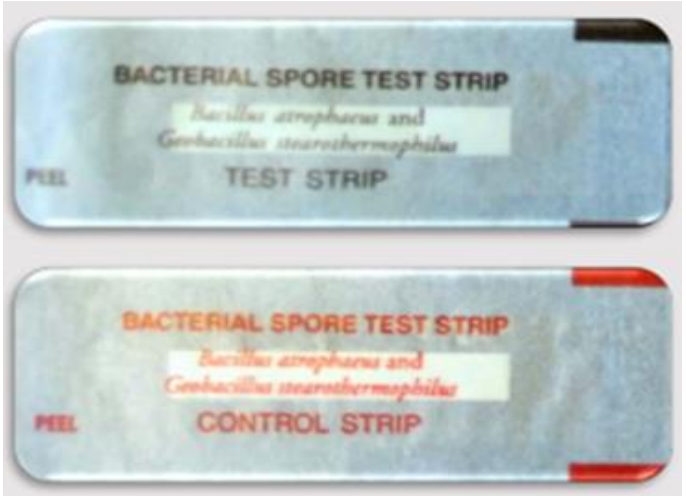
Off-site mail-in lab testing

- ✓ Longer wait on results @ 1-2 weeks
- ✓ Independent third-party results
- ✓ Failure yields increased instrument recalls and patient notifications

Summary of Infection Prevention Practices in Dental Settings: Basic Expectations for Safe Care (cdc.gov)
2024 OSAP Dental Infection Control Boot Camp
Guidelines for infection control in dental health-care settings - 2003 (cdc.gov)

Components and Frequency

- Test and control vials: each contains live bacteria and should be from same lot number (found on box or test)
  - Sterilizer MIFU specifies required type of bacterial spore test
- Test Frequency:
  - Weekly
  - ANY load that contains surgical implants
  - New personnel, equipment or packaging



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Spore Testing Process

1. Test vial/strip placed in the sterilizer, but control is not
2. Test and control are both incubated
3. **Control vial** should always show growth. No growth indicates the test did not work and a retest is required from new lot number.
4. If **test vial** is:
    1. Negative: no growth after incubation =PASS (spores from the test vial were killed)
    2. Positive: spore growth in test vial/strip = FAIL (sterilizer did not kill spores)

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Response: Positive/ Failed Spore Test

- Audit all operator techniques - Operator error #1 cause of sterilizer failure
  - Improper packaging, loading, timing, temperature or method
  - Reeducate
- Rewrap, reload with proper process and **retest**
  - Negative growth: Passed Test, sterilization achieved
    - Resume use of sterilizer
  - 2nd Positive: Failed sterilizer

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Second Failure: Notification Protocol

- Notify leadership, per protocol
- Take sterilizer out of use until repaired
  - Rental/replacement of autoclave may be required until equipment is verified as repaired (3 empty cycle passes)
- Recall, reclean, repackage all instruments processed since last pass date for **complete reprocessing**
- **Investigation:** List Potentially Exposed Patients
- Notify PDPH about breach and patients notified

✓**Outbreaks and Patient Notifications | HAI | CDC**

✓**Introduction to the Patient Notification Toolkit | Injection Safety | CDC**

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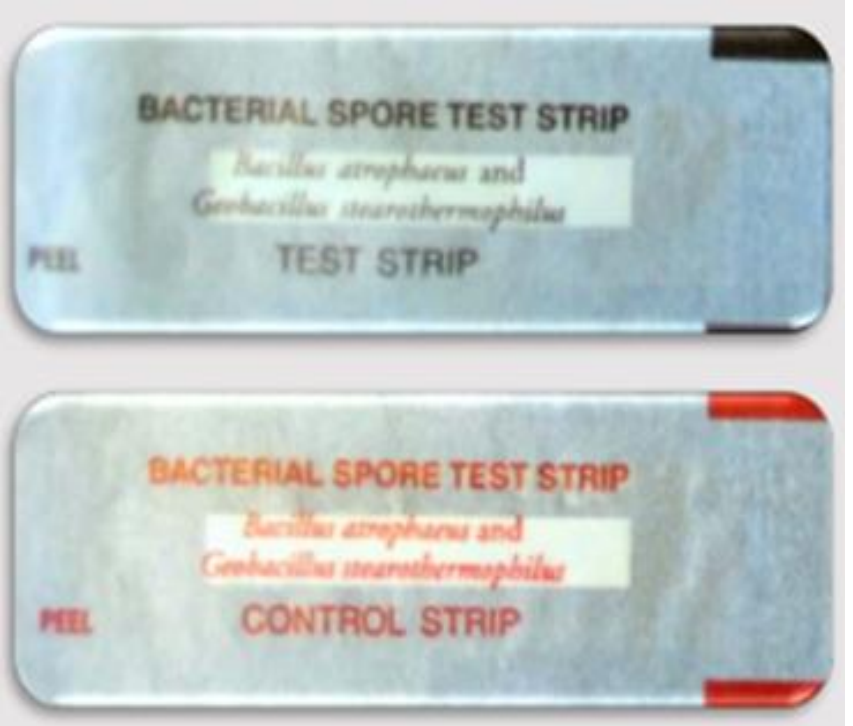
Keep A Spore Test Record

✓Record:

- BI test and control results (-/+) in sterilization log
- Failed test response details
- Repair & maintenance invoices
- Store sterile monitoring records for 3 years for verified for regulatory review



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QUALITY CONTROLS

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Effective Policy Includes Continuous Education

- **Create reprocessing and sterilization policies & procedures**
  - Base policies and procedures on MIFU's and keep them **available** for easy staff reference
  - Review policies yearly and whenever new processes are implemented
- **Training** with competency validation
  - On hire, yearly & with new items or processes
  - Maintain records of training
    - ✓ongoing_ceu_record_v2.xls
- **Auditing** with feedback assures quality compliance

SUMMARY

- Effective decontamination starts in exam rooms and ends with complete rinsing and drying
- A one-way reprocessing flow, correct use of PPE, cleaning and disinfection prevents instrument recontamination
- All instruments and supplies should be heat sterilizable or single use
- Mechanical and chemical indicators assess adequate sterilizer parameters are met, but sterility is verified by weekly spore testing
- All instruments and supplies should be sterilized and stored packaged
- Sterilization policies are guided by equipment MIFU and include all documentation of equipment testing and maintenance, and staff training on reprocessing duties

Thank You For Your Time & Attention

QUESTIONS?

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Web Resources

Guidelines for infection control in dental health-care settings - 2003 (cdc.gov)
Sterilizing Practices | Infection Control | CDC
Sterilizing Practices | Disinfection & Sterilization Guidelines | Guidelines Library | Infection Control | CDC
Summary of Infection Prevention Practices in Dental Settings: Basic Expectations for Safe Care
Best Practices in Dental Infection Prevention and Control
Foundations: Building the Safest Dental Visit
Basic Expectations for Safe Care Training Modules
Course Overview for Foundations: Building the Safest Dental Visit (youtube.com)
Guideline for Disinfection and Sterilization in Healthcare Facilities, 2008 (cdc.gov)
BESC Module 7 – Sterilization and Disinfection of Patient-Care Items and Devices (cdc.gov)SC; Presenter's Script; Module 7. (cdc.gov)
Summary of Infection Prevention Practices in Dental Settings: Basic Expectations for Safe Care (cdc.gov)
Guide to Infection Prevention for Outpatient Settings: Minimum Expectations for Safe Care (cdc.gov)
108. Sterile Processing | Infection Prevention for Support Services and the Care Environment | Table of Contents | APIC
http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.osap.org/resource/resmgr/
Symposium_2015_-_Presentations/FDA.pdf
Reprocessing Medical Devices in Health Care Settings: Validation Methods and Labeling | FDA
Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation. *ANSI/AAMI ST79:2017: Comprehensive Guide to Steam Sterilization and Sterility Assurance in Health Care Facilities*. Arlington, VA: **Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation**; 2017.IMAGES
108. Sterile Processing | Infection Prevention for Support Services and the Care Environment | Table of Contents | APIC
Sterilization Guidelines: Third Edition | International Committee of the Red Cross (icrc.org)
Spore Testing for Your Autoclave: Why, How and When | Tuttnauer
Sterilization: Monitoring | FAQs | Infection Control | Division of Oral Health | CDC
20WEB0010 - VIDEO (mycrowdwisdom.com)
spiceducation | Instrument Reprocessing: High Level Disi... | Module 4 (talentlms.com)
SumTotal Content Player-If It Ain't Broke: Sterilizer Monitoring & Testing