

Body and Beauty Art

Sterilization

What is the Health Risk?

You and your clients are at risk of being exposed to HIV, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C or other microorganisms such as bacteria or fungi.

You do not have to see blood or body fluids on equipment or surfaces for an infection to occur.

What is sterilization?

- Sterilization is a process that kills **all** forms of microbial life, including bacterial spores and blood borne virus such as, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV.

When is sterilization required?

- Instruments that pierce or penetrate the skin, for example a piercing or tattooing needle, must be sterile and only used once. These instruments are called critical items.
- Instruments that contact sterile instruments, for example forceps, must be sterile prior to use and must be sterilized between clients. These instruments are called critical items.

What are approved methods of sterilization?

1. Autoclave (steam under pressure)
 - Autoclaves must have a functioning thermometer or pressure gauge as well as a drying cycle.
 - All autoclaves must meet with Canadian Standards Association specifications for use in health care or allied health facilities.
2. Dry heat sterilizer (heat)
 - Dry heat sterilizers must have a functioning thermometer to verify temperatures.
3. Chemical autoclave (heat and chemical solution under pressure)
 - Chemical autoclaves must have a functioning thermometer or pressure gauge as well as a drying cycle.

What are unapproved methods of sterilization?

Glass-bead 'sterilizer'	UV 'sterilizer'
Ultrasonic cleaner	Pressure cookers
Boiling water	Oven
Microwave	



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How do I use a sterilizer properly?

- Follow the sterilizer manufacturer's instructions.
- Clean* instruments thoroughly before sterilization.
- Use only packaging materials that are designed specifically for the sterilizer being used.
- Use a temperature sensitive indicator (e.g. colour change tape or packaging) on every package of equipment being sterilized.
- Do not **overload** the sterilizer.
- Allow sterilized packages to dry before removing from the autoclave. Contamination can occur if packages are handled when wet.
- Mark each dry, sterilized package with the date of sterilization using a stick on label or permanent marker. Be cautious not to puncture or compromise the packaging while marking.
- Store sterilized items in their packages, in a clean, moisture resistant container with a lid.

***See the General and Operational Requirements fact sheet for detailed cleaning and disinfecting steps.**

Additional Requirements:

- Contact Peel Public Health prior to purchasing a new sterilizer or before you change your existing sterilization process.
- If your sterilizer fails a biological spore test immediately call Peel Public Health at 905-799-7700 and ask to speak with a Public Health Inspector; see **What to do in the Event of a Failed Spore Test** fact sheet.
- There should be written back-up plans in the event that the sterilizer malfunctions or you receive a failed biological spore test result from the laboratory.
- Review your written back up plan annually and post it in the sterilization area.
- Chemical sterilants are not permitted for sterilizing critical items, as critical items must be individually packaged and their sterility maintained until use.
- The use of pre-packaged, sterile, single use, disposable instruments is recommended.
- For all instruments purchased as pre-packaged and sterile, keep a record of the supplier and/or manufacturers contact information for tracking purposes.
- Instruments purchased as sterile must be used before the expiration date.
- Instruments that are in damaged sterile packages must be cleaned and re-sterilized.

For information on how to properly monitor your sterilizer see the "How to properly monitor your sterilizer" fact sheet.

Source: Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, Infection Prevention and Control Best Practices for Personal Services Settings, 2009.
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