
**POLICY ON STERILIZATION AND
OPERATION OF AUTOCLAVE MACHINE**

POLICY NO: NSO-014

DIVISION: NURSING SERVICE DIVISION

SECTION: OPERATING ROOM

POLICY REVIEW DATE: July 12, 2016

Reviewed by:		
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OBJECTIVES:

- I. To provide a systematic system of sterilization of all hospital supplies and items used for surgery.
- II. To minimize if not, eliminate prevalence of infection especially in clinical areas.

COVERAGE: This policy shall cover Operating Room Nurses and I.W under this Division.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- I. It shall be the responsibility of the utility worker and Operating Room Nurses to do autoclaving and/or the OR transporter in his place.
- II. Personnel involved must be educated in the sterilization process principles and machine operation.
- III. Responsible for cleaning, packing, sterilization and storage of sterile supplies.
- IV. Responsible for the maintenance of the machine and report for malfunctioning
- V. Responsible for the collection of all items for sterilization

POLICY:

For Sterilization

1. All reusable items shall be cleaned after use or prior to sterilizations.
2. Instruments and supplies shall be wrapped, packed properly.
3. Articles for sterilization shall be arranged so that all surfaces are exposed to the sterilization agent for the prescribed time, temperature and humidity.

For Machine Operation

1. Only authorized personnel are allowed to operate the machine.
2. Check for the level of water and the condition of the machine before running the sterilization machine.
3. Follow the operating instruction for machine operation.
4. Always check chamber and filter inside after every sterilization.
5. Make requests for repair as soon as breakdown is noted. Submit this report to Chief Nurse for notation then directed to the office of the Hospital Director.
6. Operation of the autoclave machine will only be once a day on a scheduled time.

PROCEDURE:

- I. Collect and record items for sterilization; use checklist.
- II. Check all items if properly packed and upon completion of sterilization, check for sterilization indicator.
- III. Follow operating instruction of the machine:
 - a. Before operating sterilizer, always check water level in the generator. To fill water, open all valves, except the drain valve. NEVER allow water to fall below the bottom of glass gauge or red line indicator.
 - b. Start with all valve closed, except the upper and lower valves of the water level, glass gauge should be kept open. (close ONLT in case of emergency if glass gauge breaks when operating)
 - c. Place materials in sterilizing chamber taking care to distribute the load evenly so that steam will circulate freely and penetrate the packs. Close autoclave door by hand tightening. Unnecessary tightening will shorten the life of the rubber gasket.
 - d. When jacket gauge reaches 20lbs/in pressure, current will be cut-off automatically and the heater pilot light will switch off
 - e. Open steam supply valve.
 - f. The jacket and chamber gauges will equally rise to 20lbs/in pressure and the heater pilot light will automatically on and off at an interval of 2-3lbs/in pressure. Begin timing from 20-30 minutes for complete sterilization period. Thermometer gauge will register approximately 250-255°F
 - g. Switch to "OFF"
 - h. Close steam supply valve. Open exhaust valve to release pressure inside the chamber. Leave pressure inside the jacket in preparation for the next sterilization or to easily dry dressing.
 - i. When chamber gauge drops to "0" open autoclave door approximately ½ inch beyond door collar. Leave door in this position within 5-10 minutes for further dry dressing.
 - j. Open the door widely and see to it that your proper temp. Tube sterilization indicator inserted between each pack is totally deep red in color showing that you have completed your sterilization or autoclave tape lines turn black.
 - k. After the sterilization period has been completed, lower starting switch to "OFF". Level all valves exactly as they were, allowing the sterilizer to cool down gradually. Do not open the door until the chamber gauge indicates zero pressure.
 - l. Always clean autoclave chamber and filter inside after every sterilization.
 - m. Always drain water from boiler once a month after sterilization with pressure inside the jacket and chamber so as to discharge all dirt and hard water. Be sure to turn the switch to "OFF".

DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION:

This policy has been implemented since 2003, with minor revision 2006, reviewed 2011 and 2016.

SCHEDULE FOR POLICY REVIEW:

This policy shall be revised every three (3) years or as deemed necessary.