

PROCEDURE FOR: Biological Indicator Use: Gravity Displacement Autoclaves

- POLICY: 1. A biological test is run every morning in all gravity displacement autoclaves prior to patient care use.
2. Flash sterilization of implants may be only used when necessary and must be done using a biological indicator.

EQUIPMENT: Gravity displacement steam sterilizers  
Biological indicators  
Indicator incubators

PROCEDURE:

<u>Action</u>	<u>Points of Emphasis</u>
1. Obtain indicators and label according to autoclave # and date.	1. Do not cover holes on indicator cap, or incorrect reading will occur.
2. Place in flash pan and run for 3-minute exposure.	
3. Following completion cycle, allow indicator to remain in pan for 10 minutes.	
4. Crush indicator in incubator well and leave for one hour.	4. Follow manufacturer's instructions for crushing indicator, calibrating autoloader, and reading results.
5. Use autoclave if results are negative; repeat process if results are positive.	5. After repeat positive reading, quarantine sterilizer from use and notify Facilities Management.

Flash Sterilization of Biological implants

1. Label steam biological indicator with last name of patient for whom the implant is being flash sterilized.
2. Place a steam biological indicator in the flash pan or instrument container.
3. A minimum of a 10 minute exposure must be used for any implantable item which is flash sterilized.
4. Process indicator as outlined above and follow-up with surgeon if positive results are obtained.
5. Refer to *AORN Recommended Practices for Sterilization in the Practice Setting* for other information.

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APPROVAL: Nursing Standards Committee

EFFECTIVE DATE: 10/93

REVISION DATE: 9/97, 5/00, 6/03, 1/08