

Dry Heat Sterilization or Hot Air Sterilization

High temperatures and comparatively long exposure times are required. It is not a suitable sterilizing agent for fabrics & dressings which are poor and uneven conductors and are ruined by excessive heat. It is however the method of choice for fine metal cannula (e.g., L.P. needles) and for glass syringes, since these can be sterilized with a still in or the piston in position. Heating by conduction ensures sterilization of the inside. The articles which are damaged by the moisture are sterilized by this method.

Steam Under Pressure or Autoclaving

Autoclaving or sterilization by steam under pressure is the most widely used, economical and one of the most effective methods of destroying micro-organisms. This method uses high temperature, pressure and humidity to destroy bacterial life. In an autoclave, steam under pressure to maintain the necessary high temperature for sterilization and it allows rapid penetration of articles packed in it.

For effective sterilization, the steam in the autoclave should be at 15 lbs/inch² (1.05 Kg/cm²) pressure, at 121°C temperature.

This pressure and temperature should be maintained for 30 min. With this all micro-organisms are destroyed with their spores. Autoclaving is used to sterilize all types of articles except those which are destroyed by heat and moisture.

Care of Linen

Care of linen is important, as it is an expensive item, in the running of a hospital. It costs much to buy and much to launder it.

Spoiling and wastage of linen will be avoided if the following rules are observed:

- 1) The linen cupboard should be kept in perfect order, with different items stocked separately and labelled to prevent confusion and loss of items.
- 2) The cupboard should be locked when not in use.
- 3) Care should be taken to avoid linen being taken

- home by the clients on their discharge.
- 4 Stocks should be checked at regular intervals, the inventory properly kept and losses reported promptly.
- 5 All items should be checked & used for the purpose for which they were made.
- 6 Torn linen should not be used on the bed but sent by for mending.
- 7 Soiled linen should not be placed on the floor.
- 8 Damp linen should be dried. If they are not immediately washed, lest it becomes mildewed.
- 9 If soiled with urine or motion, these should be rinsed with cold water first to remove the stain.
- 10 If there are stains, remove them by using an appropriate stain remover.
- 11 Where staining is unavoidable, old linen should be rinsed with and then use.
- 12 The linen used for an infectious client, should be disinfected first before they are sent to the laundry.
- 13 Use of mackintosh, whenever it is necessary can economize the use of them. (linen).

Care of Mattresses and Pillows

It is important to prevent the mattress from becoming wet and stained. This is done best by the use of long mackintoshes. The mattress should be brushed at regular & frequent intervals to prevent collection of dust along the seams. As far as possible washable covers which fit and completely cover the mattress should be used and these can be changed at regular intervals.

To prevent rusting of mattress from the wires or springs, use canvas between the mattress and the bedstead. When a client is discharged, the mattress should be thoroughly brushed and examined for stains and tears which should be treated at once. They are disinfected by exposing them to sunlight. Mattresses need airing by turning them daily. Care should be taken not to bend the mattress at acute angles.