



Body and Beauty Art

How to Monitor Your Sterilizer

Three forms of monitoring are required:

1. Biological monitoring (spore test)

- Must be done:
 - At least every 14 days (once every two weeks)
 - After two failed temperature sensitive indicator tests
 - When the manufacturers requirements (temperature, pressure, duration) are not met
 - After a failed spore test
 - When using a new or back up sterilizer that has not been in regular use (must pass 3 consecutive spore tests before use).
 - After repairs to the sterilizer
 - After construction or renovation in the sterilizer area
 - After moving the sterilizer
- Spore tests use heat resistant bacterial spores to determine if the sterilizer is in proper working order.
- Spore tests must be sent to an accredited laboratory for testing. A **PASSED spore test** result indicates the sterilizer has killed all of the spores and is **working properly**.
- A **FAILED spore test** result means that the sterilizer is **not working properly**. 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.
- Copies of all spore test results must be kept at the premises for at least one year and on-file for five years.
- Send a copy of every spore test result to Peel Public Health, **Email: sporetestresults@peelregion.ca** or **Fax: (905) 501-0305**.

2. Chemical monitoring (temperature sensitive indicator-TSI)

- Every instrument/ package must have a TSI (e.g. tape or label) for each use of the sterilizer.
- TSI's change colour if an adequate temperature has been reached.
- Note: this temperature change does not indicate that sterilization has been successful only that the required temperature was met.
- The TSI must be specific to the type of sterilizer being used.
- If a TSI fails retest the sterilizer using a new TSI or a new package. The instrument in the failed packaging must not be used.



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- If two TSIs fail consecutively, immediately stop using the sterilizer and any instruments that have been processed in the load(s). Conduct a biological spore test; **see the Chemical and Physical Sterilizer Monitoring poster.**
- 3. **Physical Monitoring (written records)**
 - Records must be kept every time you use the sterilizer.
 - This record must include:
 - Date
 - Batch Number
 - Start Time/ End Time
 - Cycle Length
 - Pressure or Temperature
 - Temperature Sensitive Indicator: Colour Change Observed (Y/N)
 - Operators Initials
 - Keep records on-site for a minimum of one year and on file for a minimum of five years.
 - If manufactures requirements are not met, immediately stop using the sterilizer and any instruments that have been processed in these loads. Conduct a biological spore test; **see the Chemical and Physical Sterilizer Monitoring poster.**

Chemical Integrators

Integrators may be used in between biological spore tests to ensure the sterilizer is working properly because they provide immediate time and temperature results. NOTE: The uses of chemical intergrators do not replace the routine use of biological indicators.

Source: Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, Infection Prevention and Control Best Practices for Personal Services Settings, 2009.
November 2012