

# The GERMIPHENE *REVIEW*

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## Instrument Processing

Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines have been revised in Ontario and changes are pending in Alberta's Infection Prevention and Control Standards. It may be assumed that these changes will affect other provinces in the future. Instrument reprocessing is a major component of both guidelines as this step is essential—residual organic debris will compromise the disinfection and sterilization process.

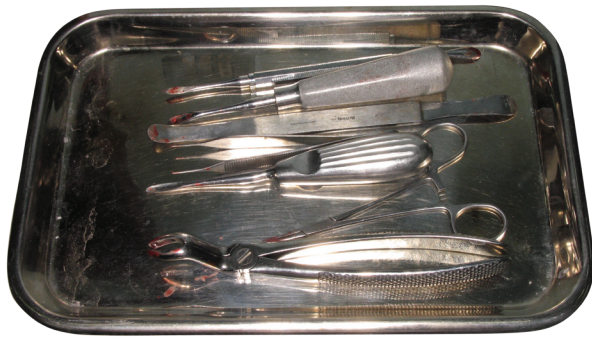
Although it is necessary to refer to guidelines or standards applicable for your province, cleaning instruments is the most important first step in reprocessing instruments and devices. "All instruments must be properly cleaned, rinsed and dried prior to either disinfection or sterilization." (Infection Prevention and Control in the Dental Office, page 24)

### Operatory Clean up

- Puncture-resistant utility gloves.

### Transport

- Puncture-resistant container.



### Delay in Cleaning

- Keep devices moist—wet towel moistened with water, foam, spray or gel intended for use or puncture-resistant holding container filled with detergent or enzymatic cleaner.



### Hand-scrubbing

- Long handled brush, puncture-resistant utility gloves, personal protective equipment.
- Do not reach into trays or containers holding sharp instruments that cannot be seen.
- Use strainer-type basket as well as forceps.



### Automated Cleaning

- Preferable to manual cleaning (safe and more efficient).
- Keep lid on ultrasonic.
- Change solution minimum of daily, more if visibly soiled.
- DO NOT USE chemical sterilants or high level disinfectants.

### Rinse after Cleaning

### Preparation and Packaging

- Inspect, assemble in sets or trays.
- Package or place in container systems for sterilization.
- Hinged instruments immersed in rust inhibitor prior to sterilization processed open and unlocked.
- Each package must have external chemical indicator. Recommended that both internal and external chemicals indicators be used to detect penetration into the package.
- Each package must have external chemical indicator (Class 1) process indicator applied to or visible from exterior of package and internal chemical indicator (Class 4 multiparameter indicator or a Class 5 integrating indicator) (Alberta.)

