

Cleaning and sterilising reusable equipment and instruments



All reusable equipment and instruments that are used in a skin penetration procedure must be cleaned and sterilised in a process that can be validated (the sterilising process can be checked) before they can be reused.

Sterilisation of reusable equipment and instruments needs to be carried out in a separate reprocessing area, and in a way that minimises recontamination. A suggested layout is provided below:

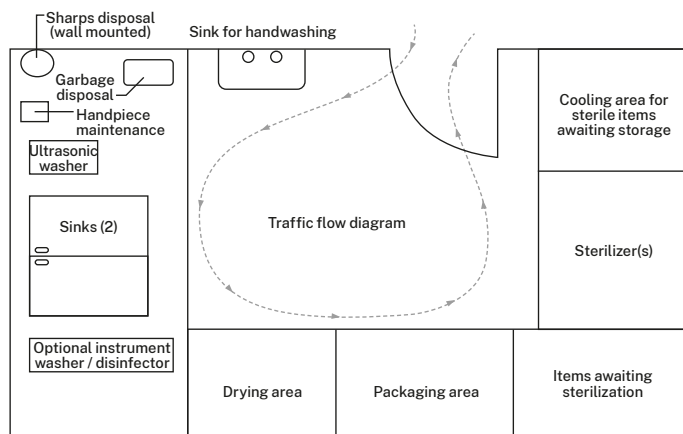


Figure 1: Suggested sterilisation area layout (AS/NZS 4815:2006)

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Cleaning

- Used equipment must be placed in a separate part of the reprocessing area with all unclean equipment and instruments.
- Place unclean equipment and instruments in the cleaning sink and rinse under warm water to remove all contaminants.
- Clean equipment and instruments with a Therapeutic Goods Authority (TGA) approved detergent in warm water using a soft brush to minimise aerosols. Open equipment such as scissors and cuticle cutters and clean all surfaces.
- Rinse equipment and instruments in warm running water and allow to dry in a drying cabinet or use a lint free cloth. Equipment and instruments should not be left to dry in the reprocessing area.

- If an ultrasonic cleaner is used to clean equipment and instruments, the manufacturer's instructions must be followed for its use.



Packaging

- Make sure instruments are completely dry before packaging.
- Place each instrument by itself in a package that is large enough to open the instrument as far as possible so that steam can penetrate all surfaces of the instrument.
- Seal the package and label the package with a water resistant felt-tipped pen. If you don't know how to package instruments, refer to the manufacturer's instructions. Test indicators can be placed in packages to confirm that the autoclave has sterilised equipment and instruments.



Sterilisation

- Load the packages into the autoclave shelf in a single layer so they are not overlapping or touching the chamber walls. Several loads may be required for large amounts of equipment.
- Keep to the sterilising procedure outlined in AS/NZS 4815:2006 *Office-based health care facilities - Reprocessing of reusable medical and surgical instruments and equipment, and maintenance of the associated environment.*

- Check the autoclave printout to make sure that the correct time, temperature and pressure levels were met.
- Remove load and check that it is dry, the packaging is undamaged, and any test indicators have changed to the correct colour.



Storage

- Store sterilised instruments in a clean and dry area away from direct sunlight.
- Only open the instrument packaging immediately before use.



Records

- The autoclave must have a printout facility that shows:
 - the time and date when each article was sterilised; and
 - the length of time that the article was sterilised and the temperature and pressure levels of the bench top autoclave.
- The sterilisation records must be kept for 12 months and stored in a safe place that is easily available and can be reviewed by an authorised officer.

Further advice

- Contact your [local council](#).
- Contact your local [Public Health Unit](#) by calling 1300 066 055.

Further information

The following resources are also available to help skin penetration businesses and practitioners understand the requirements of the *Public Health Act 2010* and Public Health Regulation 2022. Visit our [Skin penetration resources](#) page on the NSW Health website:

Fact sheets

- Beauty, body art and skin penetration industries
- How to clean and sterilise reusable equipment and instruments

Standards

- [AS/NZS 4815:2006](#)