

REUSABLE SURGICAL INSTRUMENTS

Care, cleaning and handling

General cleaning guidance for professional users. Proper care helps preserve instrument condition and performance.

Before processing

Follow the instrument manufacturer's current instructions for use (IFU), the cleaning-product and equipment instructions, and your facility's validated procedures. This general guide is not a product-specific validated reprocessing IFU. Do not use it to reprocess single-use devices.

01 / Inspection and preparation

- Inspect instruments for broken, cracked, chipped, corroded or worn parts. Remove damaged instruments from service.
- Use appropriate protective equipment and safe handling procedures for contaminated instruments and sharps.
- Open hinged instruments and disassemble removable parts only as directed by the instrument IFU. Protect delicate tips and cutting edges.

02 / Prompt pre-cleaning

- Begin pre-cleaning promptly after use. Do not allow blood or other contamination to dry on the instrument.
- Where permitted by the IFU, pre-treat with a compatible enzymatic cleaning solution. Follow the cleaning-product instructions for concentration, temperature and contact time.
- Rinse as directed using water of the quality specified in the validated process. Remove gross contamination before the main cleaning stage.

Proceed to a compatible manual or automated cleaning process. Cleaning alone does not make an instrument sterile.

CLEANING METHODS

Clean every surface

03 / Manual cleaning

Use manual cleaning where specified by the IFU or where a validated automated method is unsuitable. Pay particular attention to joints, lumens and crevices.

- Use a compatible cleaning agent. Do not use bleach, corrosive chemicals or abrasive materials unless specifically authorised by the instrument manufacturer.
- Clean submerged instruments with a soft sponge or appropriately sized soft cleaning brush, as permitted by the IFU. Avoid wire brushes that may scratch the surface.
- Clean lumens and crevices with the approved brush or flushing method. Actuate moving parts to help remove trapped soil.
- Rinse thoroughly to remove loosened soil and cleaning-agent residues. Inspect and repeat cleaning if contamination remains.

04 / Washer-disinfector processing

- Use a washer-disinfector only for instruments confirmed as compatible by their IFU. Load the instruments to allow effective contact with the cleaning and disinfection process.
- Follow the validated cycle specified for the instrument, the washer-disinfector and the facility. Select detergent, temperature, contact time, rinsing and drying settings accordingly.
- Complete the required checks and records before releasing the load for the next processing stage.

05 / Ultrasonic cleaning

- Use ultrasonic cleaning only where the instrument IFU permits it. Use a compatible solution and the specified concentration, temperature and cycle time.
- Fully immerse instruments as directed. Keep hinged instruments open and avoid overloading the basket.
- Protect sharp and delicate surfaces from contact with other instruments. Separate dissimilar metals where required. Clean lumens with the specified method.

FINISHING AND PREPARATION FOR REUSE

Rinse, inspect and prepare

06 / Rinsing and drying

- Rinse thoroughly with the water quality required by the instrument IFU and validated process. Residual cleaning solution or mineral deposits can affect instrument condition.
- Dry thoroughly using the approved drying process. Where manual drying is appropriate, use a clean, lint-free cloth.
- Inspect for remaining soil, moisture, damage and correct operation. Re-clean or remove from service when necessary.

07 / Lubrication

- Lubricate hinges and moving parts where required by the instrument IFU. Use a compatible lubricant that is suitable for the subsequent sterilisation process.
- Apply the lubricant as directed. Do not rinse it off unless the lubricant or instrument instructions require this.

08 / Packaging and sterilisation

- Package cleaned, dry instruments in the validated tray, pouch or container. Position hinged instruments as required and protect delicate parts.
- Use steam sterilisation only where the instrument IFU confirms compatibility. Follow the validated cycle and the steriliser manufacturer's instructions.
- Verify cycle acceptance, package integrity, dryness and traceability before storage or clinical use. Store in the conditions specified by the packaging and facility procedures.

Processing settings

Do not apply a universal temperature or exposure time to every instrument. Obtain the product-specific validated IFU for cleaning, disinfection and sterilisation settings. Contact info@sublimesurgical.com with the product code if these instructions are missing.

Reference: UK Department of Health and Social Care, Code of practice on the prevention and control of infections, criterion 9(j); NHS England, HTM 01-01. Cleaning themes adapted from the supplied Omega Surgical Instrument Suppliers Ltd / Medema guide; its product-validation claims have not been transferred to Sublime Surgical Ltd.