



**CORRECTIONS MEDICINE**  
**Instrument Sterilization Process**  
**ACA Standard: 4 ALDF – N/A**

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Policy Number:  
CM – 18.1

- I. **PURPOSE:** To provide written guidelines for effective cleaning and sterilization of instruments used at the Buzz Westfall Justice Center through the cold sterilization and the autoclave steam/heat sterilization processes.
  
- II. **POLICY:** Instruments shall be cleaned and disinfected after each use. The instruments shall be sterilized using either Glutaraldehyde disinfection/cold sterilization or autoclave steam/heat sterilization method.
  
- III. **RESPONSIBILITY:** All staff working in the Corrections Medicine programs are responsible for the content of this policy and procedure as well as adherence to the policy.
  
- IV. **DEFINITION:**
  - **Glutaraldehyde** – A chemical used to disinfect and clean medical, surgical, and dental equipment. Solutions containing glutaraldehyde can be used as a cold sterile ant for heat-sensitive instruments.
  
- V. **PROCEDURE:**
  1. Glutaraldehyde Disinfection/Cold Sterilization
    - a. Glutaraldehyde cold sterilization is to be used only on such items that would be damaged or destroyed by steam autoclaving.
  
    - b. Glutaraldehyde solution in use is kept in containers with secure lids. Glutaraldehyde solution is poured into containers designed for cleaning instruments.
  
    - c. Instruments that cannot be autoclaved shall be sterilized by placing the instruments in Glutaraldehyde solution for twelve (12) hours. All Glutaraldehyde solution shall be rinsed from instruments prior to use.
  
  2. Autoclave Steam/Heat Sterilization
    - a. The autoclave shall be operated according to manufacturers’ specifications.
  
    - b. All instruments that can be autoclaved without damage to the instrument shall be autoclaved.
  
    - c. Prior to placement in the autoclave, instruments shall be cleaned with soap and water and placed in a container with Glutaraldehyde solution. Instruments are then rinsed and prepared for sterilization with steam heat in the autoclave.
  
    - d. Instruments are placed in sterilization pouches prior to autoclaving.

- e. Instruments shall be placed on trays in the autoclave in a single layer. Instruments cannot overlap or be placed on top of each other.
- f. After the sterilization process is complete, the instruments should be removed from the autoclave immediately after the cooling process.