

INSTRUMENT MAINTENANCE

How to Clean Your Surgical Instruments

Inspection

General appearance of varied discoloration and build-up. Water marks cover the entire surface of the instruments and have an overall dull appearance. Brown/burgundy stains appear in the box joints along with darker charcoal and brown areas. Legitimate rust which is evidenced by loose or brittle brown like oxidization sitting on the surface and penetrating below the passivation layer.

Initial ultrasonic and mechanical cleaning and with a brush and enzymatic cleaner may remove significant amounts of surface build-up also freeing up the instruments in the box joints.

Conclusion

Such discoloration and build-up are normally associated with environmental issues including but not limited to the following:

- Insufficient mechanical or manual cleaning
- Use of inadequate cleaning, disinfecting or care agents
- Failure to observe the dosage instructions for cleaning, disinfecting or care agents
- Residues from cleaning, disinfecting or care agents
- Poor water quality (foreign ions such as iron or silicate)
- Water soluble residues
- Residues contained in the sterilizing steam
- Residues from medications, marking opens or chemical indicators
- Failure to rinse with demineralised water after cleaning.
- Autoclaves not properly maintained or regularly cleaned (including internal plumbing, water reservoir etc.
- Non use of demineralised water or using water that is recycled by the autoclave resulting in a build-up of mineral and/or organic residues
- Use of salt or chloride solutions.
- Soaking instruments in cleaning solutions for any length of time beyond that specified by the manufacturer.
- Allowing instruments to air dry after cleaning or autoclaving.