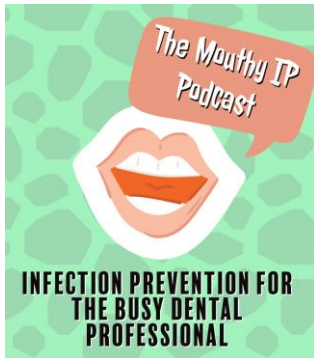




Infection Control Assessment
and Promotion Program

Contact Nebraska ICAP at
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THE MOUTHY IP PODCAST

EPISODE 3:

INSTRUMENT PROCESSING AND STERILIZATION

***ALL INFORMATION
IS ACCURATE AS OF
THE DATE THIS
EPISODE WAS
RECORDED**

Summary:

The ICAP team got a call asking how sterilization processes can contribute to disease outbreaks in dentistry.

Key Takeaways:

- Instrument processing and sterilization of instruments is critically important in any healthcare setting to prevent infectious disease outbreaks.
- Proper training on sterilization must be provided to employees to ensure standards are met.
- Cleaning: removing bioburden off a surface before disinfecting, must be done for disinfection/ sterilization to be effective.
- Disinfection: Deactivating most of the microorganisms off a surface.
- Sterilization: Deactivating ALL the microorganisms off a surface including bacterial spores.
- Sterilization indicators (both internal and external) should be used to ensure the sterilization process has been completed with every pouch and cassette.
- Wet Packs are not sterile, the moisture wicks microorganisms into the pack.
- Immediate Use Steam Sterilization (IUSS) should only be done on instruments that are being used right away; they can't be stored for future use.

Resource List:

1. Sterilization and Disinfection of Patient-care Items in Oral Healthcare Settings https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/pdfs_and_other_files/BESC7-Sterilization-508.pdf
2. CDC Statement on reprocessing dental handpieces: <https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/infectioncontrol/statement-on-reprocessing-dental-handpieces.htm>
3. Wet Pack Resource: https://www.iahcsmm.org/images/Lesson_Plans/CRCST/CRCST155.pdf
4. Peeks and Pitfalls of Sterilization ICAP Webinar: <https://icap.nebraskamed.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/06/6.9.21-3.pdf?highlight=wet%20pack>