

# Recommended Cleaning, Sterilization and Maintenance of Hygienic Instruments

Dental Dam Clamps / Dental Dam Forceps / Dental Dam Punch / Dental Dam Frame (Plastic and Metal)

**CAUTION – INTENDED FOR PROFESSIONAL DENTAL USE ONLY.** Dental Dam Clamps, Forceps, and Frames are classified as Critical or Semi-critical instruments by the American Dental Association with reference to the Centers for Disease Control classification system due to contact with the bloodstream, normally sterile tissue, mucous membranes, or the skin. Inspect, clean and sterilize these instruments before each use, or replace them when they become distorted, worn or cracked.

## Presoak/Holding

Rinse and clean immediately following the procedure. If products cannot be cleaned immediately, soak instruments in a neutral pH cleaning solution like BioSonic UC30, UC31 or UC32.

## Cleaning

Always wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) while handling used dental equipment. It is important that all blood, dried body fluids and tissues be removed from the instruments prior to sterilization.

**Rinsing** – Immediately after use, rinse organic materials off instruments under warm running water. The purpose of this step is to remove most blood, fluids and tissue from the instrument.

**Ultrasonic Cleaning (recommended):** Follow ultrasonic cleaner manufacturer's instructions. Rinse and remove excess material prior to ultrasonic cleaning. Use a pH neutral, general purpose cleaning solution such as, but not limited to BioSonic UC30, UC31 or UC32. All instruments should be completely submerged in the cleaner bath. Hinged instruments should be cleaned in the open position. For cleaning times, follow the instructions listed on the cleaning solutions label. Ultrasonic cleaning solutions should be changed at least daily and more often if the solution in the tank becomes visibly dirty. Rinse cleaning agents from instruments. Inspect to see that all debris has been removed from instrument. Repeat if necessary. Allow instrument to dry.

**Manual Cleaning:** Use a stiff nylon cleaning brush to carefully scrub instrument. Use of a stainless steel wire brush or steel wool will damage the instruments. Use a pH neutral cleaning solution such as, but not limited to BioSonic UC30, UC31 or UC32. Rinse cleaning agents from instruments. Inspect to see that all debris has been removed from instrument. Repeat if necessary. Allow instrument to dry.

## Autoclave:

Follow autoclave manufacturer's instructions and ensure that maximum load is not exceeded. Lubricate hinged instruments with a non-silicone water soluble surgical lubricant. Disposable sterilization pouches are recommended. For Dental Dam Clamps, Forceps and Punches, steam sterilize for 15 minutes at 130°C / 266°F in a gravity autoclave or 134°C / 273°F for 4 minutes in a pre-vacuum sterilizer. Do not heat metal based instruments above 177°C / 350°F. For all Dam Frames, steam sterilize for 20 minutes at 121°C / 250°F. Do not heat above 125°C / 257°F or the plastic dam frames will warp. Allow instrument to dry. Make sure instruments are dry before storing.

## Trouble shooting

**Stains on Instruments** - From time to time, instruments discolor during the cleaning process. Oftentimes this is misinterpreted as rust. Black stains are indicative that the pH of the cleaning solution was too low (acidic). Brown stains are indicative that the pH of the cleaning solution was too high (basic). Proper rinsing and drying of the instruments prior to autoclaving should eliminate any chance of staining. Dissimilar metals should be cleaned and autoclaved separately as cleaning or autoclaving together can cause galvanic staining where the two instruments were touching.

For most tabletop autoclaves, the door must be cracked about ¼ inch at the end of the cycle to allow the instruments to efficiently dry. If the door is opened too much, cold air will rush in and cause condensation on the instruments. This can lead to water stains or wet packs.

**Chemical / Cold Sterilization is not recommended for Hygienic Dental Dam instruments like clamps, forceps and punches as the 6 to 10 hour immersion times can cause corrosion and dulling of the punch and premature failure of the clamp and forceps. Additionally, soaking dam clamps in bleach can cause premature failure of the clamps.**