

Rubber Products Storage, Cleaning and Sterilization Guidelines (Anesthesia Associates)

Storage, Cleaning and Sterilization Guidelines for Rubber Products

A. Storage - All rubber, neoprene and plastic products should be stored in a cool, dark environment, in containers which help minimize mechanical damage and prevent condensation of moisture on the products. Ideal Storage temperatures are for 5° C (40° F) to 15° C (59° F).

Direct and indirect sunlight and artificial light with ultraviolet content will hasten deteriorations of all rubber goods.

Rubber, neoprene and plastic products should be stored in such a way that contact with metals, liquid, solvents, oils, or greases is avoided.

Shelf life when stored according to recommendations should be approximately two years with the exception of conductive rubber which has a shelf life of 6 months.

B. Cleaning - Rubber, neoprene and plastic products may be washed with mild detergents of a natural liquid soap. Avoid cleaning tools which can harm the surface of the products. After washing, articles should be air dried.

C. Sterilization - Along with following outlined recommendations, personnel should closely follow the appropriate manufacturers recommendation relating to the use of chemicals, procedures, and/or equipment.

1. **Autoclaving** - Plastic parts must not be heat sterilized! Rubber parts may be steamed, but it must be noted that high temperature and repeated autoclaving will hasten deterioration of the products. Longer life of the products will be achieved if cold sterilization is used.

Rubber and neoprene bags and tubes may be autoclaved using normal rubber cycle methods. Temperature must not exceed 134° C (250° F) for 15 minutes.

2. **Ethylene Oxide Gas Method** - All reusable rubber and plastic products with the exception of cushion masks may be sterilized using ETO if sufficient aeration is provided.

SPECIAL NOTE: Dry heat must not be used for Sterilization!

Conductive rubber products must not come into contact with:

Strong cleaning Soaps Ethers

Phenols Cresols

Mydocarbons Alcohol

Vegetable or mineral oils Cleaning Fluids

Copper, Brass, Manganese or Oxidizing agents

PRODUCTS SHOWING DETERIORATION SHOULD BE DESTROYED.