Pack Monitoring

Pack Monitoring is defined as the use of chemical indicators for internal monitoring of packs, trays, containers and peel pouches. Internal pack monitoring verifies that the sterilant has penetrated to the point of placement of the chemical indicator in the pack and confirms that specific exposure conditions have been met.

3M™ Comply™ (SteriGage™) Steam Chemical Integrator (ISO Type E) • Conforms to ISO 17665-1:2014 Type 5 Integrating Indicator performance requirements, ensuring the response correlates with a BI at three-time/temperature relationships under ideal steam sterilization conditions.
• For use in all 121-125°C steam sterilization cycles, which eliminates the potential error of selecting the incorrect Type E cycle-specific integrating indicator and reduces your chemical indicator inventory.
• Migrating “moving front style” ink technology provides instant “Accept” or “Reject” results at a glance that do not require color interpretation. A study is available that shows higher reading accuracy than color-change indicators.*

*Comparing the Interpretive Accuracy Between Chemical Moving-Front Integrators, Color-Change Integrators and Strips. 70-2008-067-1

Exposure Monitoring

In most cases, sterilizer operators will not inspect chemical indicators used inside sealed packs once they have been opened in the OR or another department. Exposure monitoring products are a way for sterilizer operators to know at a glance whether packs have been exposed to the sterilization process without the need to open the pack or process items that the pack has been exposed to the sterilization process with the need to open the pack or check Load Control records.

3M™ Comply™ Steam Indicator Tapes
• Adhesive is designed specifically for reusable and disposable wraps.
  – 3M™ Comply™ 1322 Steam Indicator Tape for reusable and disposable wrap
  – 3M™ Comply™ 1355 Steam Indicator Tape for disposable wrap
• Adhesive seals packs securely. Backing stretches to minimize tear-pop-off during sterilization.
• Can be written on or labeled with preprinted labels such as 3M™ SteriGage™ Load Label tapes.
• Lead-free chemistry means no hazardous waste issues.
• Not made with natural rubber latex.

Putting Standards into Practice

3M Health Care Academy

Understanding how to implement them is just as critical. Through 3M™ Health Care Academy, 3M provides a network of educational services and training resources dedicated to improving competency and performance in the field of sterility assurance. For example:
• 3M™ Health Care Academy members can easily register for CE credited live educational events, access CE credited on demand education, view product training videos and connect to healthcare guidelines, in-service articles and more.
• Over 1,000 professionals attend our monthly live webinars,
• We also conduct local CE credited Speaker Programs and sponsor CE credited Self Study lessons in AHA/IAHCSMM Communicare and Healthcare Purchasing News.

References
Equipment Monitoring

Equipment Monitoring is a way to find out whether or not your sterilizer is doing its job properly. To monitor vacuum-assisted steam sterilizers, you begin each day with a Bowie-Dick type test to detect leaks, inadequate air removal, inadequate steam penetration and the presence of non-condensable gases, any of which can compromise sterilization.

3M™ Comply® Bowie-Dick Plus Test Pack

- Equivalent in performance to Bowie-Dick towel pack described in ANSI/AAMI ST79.
- Early Warning Test Sheet provides advance notice of sterilizer problem.
- Chemical indicator ink retains final result so test sheet can be filed for quality assurance records of sterilizer problem.
- Yellow to brown/black indicator ink color change is easy to interpret.
- Lead-free chemistry eliminates disposal headaches.

Load Monitoring

Load Monitoring is the process by which a load is monitored and released based on the result of a biological indicator (BI) and released after a pre-determined test time. If the result of the test BI is positive, all items from that load and all items from loads processed since the last load with a negative BI result should be recalled and reprocessed.

Load Monitoring is a process that monitors the sterilization of loads containing implants.

3M™ Attest® Rapid 5 Steam-Plus Challenge Pack

- Includes a 3M™ Attest® Rapid 5 Readout Biological Indicator (BI) that provides results in three hours and a 3M™ Comply® (SteriGage™) moving front Type 5 Integrating Indicator.
- Meets AAMI ST79 requirements for process challenge devices for loads containing implants.
- Reduces quarantine time, providing BI results in 3 hours (Rapid) and 1 hour (Super Rapid) compared to 24 hour BIs, improving instrument throughput to the OR and maintaining patient satisfaction.
- Enables you to make decisions and take action prior to surgery, reducing risk and costs associated with recalls and surgical site infections.

Putting Standards into Practice

1. To avoid false failures, run a warm-up cycle before running the Bowie-Dick test.
2. Place your BD test pack on the bottom shelf of the cart, over the drain, in an empty sterilizer.

Putting Standards into Practice

1. A positive control from the same lot number should be included each day a test BI is included in each 3M™ Attest® Auto-reader.
2. If a test BI is positive, all items from that load and all items from loads processed since the last load with a negative BI result should be recalled and reprocessed.
3. Loads containing implants should be quarantined until BI results are known.

In today’s healthcare environment, you demand speed, accuracy, credibility and efficiency in all phases of the sterilization process. 3M stands ready to put our leadership, products, services and educational tools to work for you. As a worldwide leader, our comprehensive product line is backed by excellence in every aspect of sterilization assurance.

Four proven, standards-based answers for reducing the risk of undetected sterilization process failures.

You understand the value of AAMI standards and AORN Guidelines. And you work hard to stay up to date on them, because you feel responsible for patient safety. But it’s not always easy with all that’s being demanded of you these days. Training new staff. Educating existing staff. Managing turnover and burnout. Dealing with recalls. Managing to reduce costs and challenging economic times. It’s a full plate, and then some.

What is the purpose of Standards and Guidelines in the healthcare setting?

Overall, Standards Organizations strive to promote best practices within your profession. Specifically in the realm of Sterile Processing, these Organizations provide guidelines for the reprocessing of medical devices to be used in the surgical environment to help ensure their safe and effective use. These voluntary guidelines reflect the expertise of a committee comprised of healthcare professionals and, in the case of AAMI, representatives from industry and the U.S. FDA.

As a leader responsible for providing sterilized devices for patient procedures, what Standards and Guidelines should I be incorporating into my policies and procedures?

The Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation (AAMI), Association of periOperative Registered Nurses (AORN), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and The Joint Commission all have guidelines or standards that influence the reprocessing of medical devices.

Why is it important to follow Standards and Guidelines?

This is where 3M can help. By standardizing on our Core Four sterilization monitoring products and following Standards and Guidelines, you can make sure you’re doing the right thing for your facility and its patients.

What’s more, through 3M HealthCare Academy, we’ll keep you up to date on changes in newly published recommended practices and what they mean to your operating room (OR) and other areas. We can help you stay up to date on your training programs for the next level through access to dozens of CE-credited courses through our partnership with The Joint Commission Online. Best of all, the content will always be aligned with the most current Standards and Guidelines.

There are no shortcuts to patient safety. But using the 3M Core Four Monitoring Products and 3M HealthCare Academy educational resources can help you feel more confident of your department’s efforts.

To learn more about our Core Four standardization program or 3M Sterilization products or services, call the 3M Health Care Helpline at 1-800-228-3957.