

3M™ Comply™ Bowie-Dick Type Test Systems

Commonly Asked Questions

Question:

How does your Bowie-Dick Plus Test Pack compare in cost with what I use now?

Answer:

The basic unit cost should be comparable but you should look at the higher value of the Bowie-Dick Plus Test Pack. Reduction and control of sterilizer downtimes by detecting pending failures with the early warning feature saves additional money.

Question:

What size air leaks will the 3M™ Bowie-Dick Plus Test Packs detect?

Answer:

Vacuum leak rates that can cause failure in a Bowie-Dick Test Pack vary significantly according to size of the sterilizer chamber as well as location of the leak. An important performance characteristic is that the commercial test pack detects failures comparable to AAMI test pack.

Question:

My Bowie-Dick Plus Test Sheet shows only faint failures and often they appear intermittently. Why?

Answer:

It is important to run a warm-up cycle prior to the Bowie-Dick test cycle to purge air that has collected in the lines and to bring the sterilizer up to operating temperature to prevent "ghost" symptoms. To optimize the test, run one pack on the bottom shelf over the drain, not on the floor of the sterilizer.

Question:

Can I run my biological indicator in my Bowie-Dick Type Test Pack or my biological indicator test pack in the same load as the Bowie-Dick Type Test Pack?

Answer:

No, because a Bowie-Dick test is not used to verify the efficacy of the sterilization process but to verify the efficacy of the vacuum of a function vacuum-assisted steam sterilizer.

The Bowie-Dick test is used for equipment control to determine whether or not the sterilizer is doing its job properly. The test must be the only pack in the load (i.e.; empty load) to create the greatest challenge to air removal and steam penetration. A biological indicator pack is used for load control to monitor and release the load based on the results of the biological indicator. This pack is run in a full load to create the greatest challenge to the sterilization process for sterilizers >2 cubic feet and table-top sterilizers in an empty load for flash sterilization.

Question:

Why would I want to buy a disposable test pack?

Answer:

A disposable test pack construction is more consistent from pack to pack because it is manufactured under Good Manufacturing Practices or a Quality System. The manufacturing of the pack is more consistent so the challenge to the sterilization process is more consistent. In the U.S., it has also been shown that it is less expensive to purchase a disposable Bowie-Dick Test pack than to make one.

For More Information

Contact your 3M Health Care Sales Representative, or call the 3M Health Care Customer Helpline at **1-800-228-3957**. These products can be ordered from your local distributor. Outside the United States, contact the local 3M subsidiary.



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