

Sterile Processing & COVID-19

MANUAL CLEANING EXPERT SERIES

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Jamie Zarembinski, CCSVP
Clinical Educator, Key Surgical

Beyond Clean Manual Cleaning Expert Series:

STERILE PROCESSING & COVID-19

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COVID-19 has been at the forefront of the media and will likely remain there for the foreseeable future. More evidence of how long SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19 virus) can survive on surfaces, such as medical devices and equipment, is being compiled. The CDC states: "...coronavirus may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made from a variety of materials. Cleaning of visibly dirty surfaces followed by disinfection is a best practice measure for prevention of COVID-19." These recommendations sound a lot like what every sterile processing professional does, every single day. Sterile processing plays a critical role in the patient care cycle, especially when reprocessing instruments used in emergency procedures for high-risk patients. Many sterile processing departments are accustomed to working with scarce resources and little support, but they will likely be asked to continue to do more with less in the coming weeks, and months. COVID-19 isn't changing the way that sterile processing professionals decontaminate surgical instrumentation and other medical devices, standard precautions dictate that all contaminated devices be treated as though they are contaminated with pathogenic microorganisms. What COVID-19 is changing is the healthcare environment and availability of resources. Continuing to follow instrument reprocessing standards and best practices such as PPE requirements and adhering to validated cleaning instructions for medical devices are essential to protect patients and sterile processing professionals alike. These are uncertain times and new information is released every day. We must be flexible and creative on how we approach COVID-19 in sterile processing, but what's most important is that we continue to do what's right; every single instrument, every single time.

Have more manual cleaning questions? Contact Jamie at: Jamie.Zarembinski@KeySurgical.com

Beyond Clean Manual Cleaning Expert Biography:

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Jamie Zarembinski is a Certified Central Service Vendor Partner (CCSVP) through IAHCSSM. She has over 7 years of experience in the Sterile Processing Industry supporting departments as a sales representative and clinical educator at Key Surgical. Recent recipient of the Robert Hilbolt Award for outstanding healthcare professional in the Sterile Processing industry from the Michigan Society of Healthcare Central Service Professionals (MSHCSP). Currently, Jamie is a Clinical Educator for Sterile Processing at Key Surgical. She plays an active role in the sterile processing industry as a speaker at medical facilities and educational seminars around the United States. She works with sterile processing staff to share, develop, and implement best practices based on recommendations by our governing bodies such as ANSI/AAMI, IAHCSSM, SGNA, AORN and others. She is a member of IAHCSSM, AORN and is a voting member of AAMI ST/WG 40. Jamie is working towards her CRCST, CIS, CER, and CHL.

