SURGERY- STERILIZATION OF EQUIPMENT

**SX34.** The practice follows a written sterilization protocol that provides for appropriate sterile equipment and supplies.

#### Goal: To establish a consistent approach in achieving the highest level of asepsis with each sterilizing task

###### Purpose: To provide sterile instruments for the use in surgical procedures

**Performance Responsibility:** The surgical technician will perform the task, the head technician will supervise the duties and any oversight

**Timeframe:** Ongoing supply of surgical instrumentation for scheduled and emergency procedures

**Process:**

* Know sterility shelf life for gas and steam sterilization
* Rotate packs and instruments according to most current dates being used last
* Establish schedule for checking and resterilizing instruments and packs
* Have a comprehensive list of all instruments. Practice team members should know them individually as well as what pack they belong in
* Inspect and maintain each instrument for wear, defect, or contaminant
* All linens should be washed and dried separately. Discard anything that is torn or

shedding fibers

* All packs and instruments should be kept in an enclosed cabinet or drawer and free of airflow, moisture, and other contaminants
* Practice team member should have a complete understanding of maintenance, cleaning, use and type of water used for best result in autoclave. The entire team should be aware of safety hazards involving gas sterilization and observe all appropriate precautions and procedures
* There should be a designated drying and venting area for completed packs
* All packs should be dated, contents identified, and include the initials of the practice team member responsible for sterilizing the pack or instrument

#### Example

In order to ensure the availability of sterile packs, Best Animal Hospital utilizes the following guidelines:

Surgical technicians are familiar with shelf life of packs and rotate/pull them oldest to newest. They do this the 1st of every month and re-autoclave anything over 30 days, or re-gas sterilize anything over 90 days, according to delicacy of instrument. All packs and contents are identified with color coded autoclave tape. All packs contain a sterile indicator, as well as being doubled wrapped. The following supplies are always available: assorted wraps and bags, marking pens, tape, scissors, sterile indicators, point covers, bowls, and trays. Autoclave tape is used on the outside of pack with technician’s initials and date pack was sterilized.