

MANUAL & MECHANICAL CLEANING OF DENTAL INSTRUMENTS

Single
Point
Lesson

What HTM 01 05 guidance says: “Instruments should be reprocessed using a validated decontamination process including a validated steam sterilizer, and at the end of the reprocessing cycle they should be sterilized”. “Inspection processes should ensure that the standards of cleaning achieved are visually satisfactory - that is, that instruments are free from particulate contamination, salt deposits or marked discoloration”. For inspection of all instruments “The use of a simple magnifying device with task lighting is required”.

‘What shall I clean the instruments with?’

- If manually cleaning a neutral detergent and long handled bristle brush (HTM 01 05) can be used. Nailbrushes & wire brushes **MUST** not be used for manual cleaning of any instruments.
- If using an ultrasonic bath/washer disinfectant manufacturer’s guidance on cleaning/disinfection products should be used.
- For pre-soaking never use just water. A neutral or enzymatic detergent should be used to prevent bio-burden growth and to assist in the cleaning process.

Decontamination of Instruments

- Cleaning and inspection are key parts of satisfactory dental instrument re-processing.
- Cleaning of instruments can be carried out by using manual cleaning or mechanical processes.
- Practices should plan for the introduction of washer-disinfectors.
- Inspection processes should ensure that the standards of cleaning achieved are visually satisfactory by using a magnifying device with task lighting - that is, that instruments are free from particulate contamination, salt deposits or marked discoloration.
- Manufacturers guidance for cleaning should always be followed.
- **Always** wear appropriate PPE when cleaning.

As part of validating manual cleaning: water temperature and the correct ratio of neutral detergent to water **MUST** be measured for each cleaning task (HTM 01 05)

Instruments should **ALWAYS** be kept moist/ pre-soaked using a neutral or enzymatic detergent if they are not to be cleaned immediately after use

Manual cleaning protocols should be in place in the practice even if manual cleaning is not undertaken routinely

There should be a policy or written procedure in place for decontamination in the practice. It should include all appropriate aspects of decontamination within the practice e.g. cleaning, disinfection, inspection, packaging, disposal, sterilization, transport and storage of re-usable and single use instruments.

If using an ultrasonic bath then as part of validation it should be maintained and serviced in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions (HTM 01 05).

Complex instruments should be dismantled or ‘opened up fully’ to aid effective cleaning. For example:
Amalgam carriers
Forceps
Scissors
Matrix bands

Please contact Karen Jones if you require any additional advice/support on 01928 593476