Purpose:
Premier Medical Group will provide clean and sterile supplies for patient care. This policy defines the responsibility for cleaning, disinfecting, sterilization, and storage of patient care instruments.

Policy:
All staff that are responsible for the patient care devices and other items that require cleaning, high level disinfection, and/or sterilization will process these items according to policy.

Procedure:
- All objects to be disinfected or sterilized should first be thoroughly cleaned to remove all organic matter (blood and tissue) and other residue. This includes moving of hinged parts, lumens and items to be disassembled.
- All items used in patient care shall be kept clean and in proper working condition.
- All medical instruments and other items used for patient care must be cleaned and disinfected or sterilized before use on another patient.
- A hospital grade disinfectant approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) must be used to disinfect medical instruments and other healthcare items.

Please refer to the manufacturer’s instructions for use of the appropriate type of disinfectant and the best method of cleaning and sterilizing each piece of medical instrumentation.

Spaulding Classification of Patient Care Items

Critical Items
Critical medical devices that enter normally sterile tissue or the vascular system or through which blood flows, should be sterilized before each use (refer to methods of sterilization and disinfection in this policy and manufacturer’s instructions for use [MFG’s IFU] for medical devices being sterilized).

Semi-critical Items
Devices that come in contact with mucous membranes or skin that is not intact should be free of all microorganisms except for bacterial spores and are called semi critical medical devices. Intact mucous membranes are generally resistant to infection by common bacterial spores but susceptible to other organisms such as tubercle bacilli and viruses. Respiratory and anesthesia devices, endoscopes, diaphragm fitting rings and vaginal speculums are included in this category. Semi critical items require high-level disinfection which is defined as the destruction of all vegetative microorganisms, mycobacterium, small or non-lipid viruses, medium or lipid viruses, fungal spores, and some bacterial spores.
Non-critical Items
Medical devices that come in contact with intact skin, but not mucous membranes only need cleaning or low-level disinfection. Disinfection is a process that eliminates pathogenic microorganisms on inanimate objects with the exception of bacterial spores. Chemical germicides used for disinfection should be registered with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

- Cleaning and decontamination should begin as soon as possible after use as blood and body fluids can cause pitting of instruments and if left to dry can be difficult to remove.
- Once in the instrument processing area, the instruments will be inspected.
- Washing must be done in a soiled utility area to prevent splattering or contaminating clean supplies or areas. Gown, and gloves should be worn for cleaning, and goggles should be worn to protect the eyes from splatter.
- All instruments that are grossly soiled will be soaked in water with enzymatic solution (follow MFG’s IFU for appropriate soaking time) and thoroughly brushed.
- All instruments will be cleaned with an enzymatic solution per MFG’s instructions.
- If the instruments have a lumen, the lumen must be irrigated with enzyme cleaner diluted according to MFG’s IFU and brushed until all visible body fluids are removed. The lumen will be rinsed until all visible body fluids are removed.
- All jointed instruments should be in the open or unlocked position with ratchets unengaged. Instruments with more than one part or with sliding pieces or removable parts should be disassembled unless the device manufacturer provides documented evidence that the item can be successfully disinfected or sterilized in its assembled state.
- Brushes and other cleaning supplies, if reusable, should be disinfected/sterilized after each use.
- Regardless of manual or mechanical cleaning, use warm water. Use appropriate detergent.
- Rinse all instruments thoroughly to remove loose debris and detergent residue using warm tap or treated water as indicated by the device MFG’s IFU.
- Prior to undergoing final sterilization or high level disinfection all instruments/equipment are thoroughly cleaned, rinsed, dried and inspected for the presence of dried blood or other debris. (per manufacturer’s recommendations), in a soiled utility area, prior to placement in the disinfectant or autoclave.
- Dry and package/store per manufacturer’s (MFG’s) recommendations.
- All specialty medical instruments with a manufacturer manual should have the manuals maintained for ready accessibility to all healthcare employees for reference.
- All personnel responsible for instrument cleaning and reprocessing must receive proper training on their operation and preparation of items to be disinfected or sterilized and their safety. Training records and competencies will be maintained in each clinic as well as Human Resources.

Date to be reviewed: 01/18