



Flash Sterilization (30 min Cycle): Tuttnauer

Flash sterilization refers to the use of a steam autoclave to sterilize an unwrapped instrument in a shorter time period for urgent use. If an autoclave is already warm from use, flash autoclave sterilization make take as little as 15 minutes from start to finish. The major reason the flash setting is shorter than standard is the lack of any packaging to interfere with sterilization of the metal object. If an autoclave has not been used for several hours, it will take longer to achieve working temperature (up to 35 min). The instrument is placed on a perforated metal tray (the standard autoclave tray) and after completion of the cycle the entire tray can be carried by a non-sterile assistant into the surgical suite for immediate use of the instrument. If the cooling cycle is shortened (many autoclaves allow opening of the chamber before cooling is complete), the surgeon will need to place the instrument or implant in sterile saline to lower the temperature rapidly and ensure safe handling. This can be done easily with a sterile gauze bowl filled with saline on the surgeon's table. Typical surgical indications for flash sterilization include a critical instrument or implant dropped from the sterile field during surgery or an unexpected instrument required that was not sterile. Another common indication for flash sterilization is endoscopic procedures where sterility is required (e.g. tracheoscopy, urethroscopy). Many endoscopic instruments are not typically stored as sterile packages. A flash sterilization of the rigid endoscopic biopsy forceps, for example, could easily be performed between patients after normal cleaning without requiring the typical full packaged steam autoclave process.

1. Lay 1-2 de-linted huck towels on the sterilization tray.
2. Put desired **unwrapped** instrument(s) on top of the huck towels.
3. Place tray and instruments in Tuttnauer. Tightly close door.
4. Check water level (should be just above the coil).
5. Select the "scissor" icon (labeled for flash).
6. Hit the "start" button.

Temperature must reach 273F (shown on screen), and sterilize for 3 minutes
7. After cycle has completed, screen will read "Finished." **CONTENTS WILL BE HOT.**
8. Put on your oven mitts.
9. Open Tuttnauer. Stand behind door so that steam does not come in contact with unprotected skin.
10. Avoid contact with newly sterilized items. Bring tray to surgeon and notify that instruments are still hot. Surgeon may request sterile saline for cooling.