

# Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

## Preparation of Equipment for Sterilization: Packaging, Wrapping, Labeling

This SOP details the **preparation of equipment for sterilization**, including proper packaging techniques, effective wrapping methods, and accurate labeling protocols to ensure sterilization efficacy and traceability. It covers guidelines for selecting appropriate packaging materials, securing packages to maintain sterility, and applying standardized labels with relevant information such as sterilization date, contents, and responsible personnel. The objective is to optimize sterilization readiness, prevent contamination, and maintain a reliable sterilization process in healthcare or laboratory environments.

### 1. Purpose

To establish standardized procedures for packaging, wrapping, and labeling equipment prior to sterilization, ensuring sterility, traceability, and safety throughout the process.

### 2. Scope

This SOP applies to all personnel involved in the preparation of equipment for sterilization in healthcare and laboratory settings.

### 3. Responsibilities

- **Staff:** Follow all procedures as outlined in this SOP.
- **Supervisors:** Ensure adherence to SOP and provide necessary training.
- **Quality Assurance:** Monitor compliance and completeness of documentation.

### 4. Materials Required

- Appropriate sterilization wraps (e.g., crepe paper, non-woven fabric, pouches, containers)
- Sterilization indicator strips
- Adhesive tape for sterilization (autoclave tape)
- Standardized sterilization labels
- Permanent markers
- Personal protective equipment (PPE)

### 5. Procedure

1. **Inspection and Cleaning:**
  - Visually inspect all equipment for cleanliness and damage.
  - Ensure items have been cleaned and dried prior to packaging.
2. **Selection of Packaging Material:**
  - Choose suitable wrapping/pouch/container for the equipment, considering size, shape, and sterilization method.
  - Ensure material is compatible with the sterilization process (e.g., steam, EO gas, dry heat).
  - Check for damage or tears in packaging material before use.
3. **Packing the Equipment:**
  - Arrange equipment to allow optimal steam or gas exposure; disassemble instruments as required.
  - Place chemical indicator strip inside the package/pouch.
4. **Wrapping Technique:**
  - If using wraps, use the appropriate wrapping technique (e.g., envelope or square fold).
  - Ensure all edges and corners are properly covered.
  - Secure wraps with autoclave tape or appropriate seal.
5. **Labeling:**
  - Apply standardized sterilization labels to each package/pouch.
  - Labels should include:
    - Sterilization date
    - Contents description
    - Initials or signature of responsible staff
    - Load or batch number (if applicable)
  - Write clearly using a permanent marker.
6. **Final Check:**
  - Inspect all packages for integrity and correctness of labeling.
  - Ensure packages are not overloaded or underfilled.

- Prepare packaged equipment for sterilization according to facility protocol.

6. Documentation

- Record all packaged equipment in the sterilization log, noting label details and responsible personnel.
- Maintain logs for records and audit purposes as per facility requirements.

7. References

- Facility Infection Control Policies
- Manufacturer's instructions for sterilization equipment and packaging materials
- AAMI, CDC, or other regulatory guidelines on sterilization

8. Revision History

Version	Date	Author	Summary of changes
1.0	2024-06-01	Your Name	Initial SOP creation

**NOTE:** Follow all facility-specific policies. Report any deviations or issues to supervisors immediately.