



Update:

Disinfection of intracavity ultrasound transducers

The Australian Sonographers Association advises all members that disinfection of intracavity ultrasound transducers should meet the appropriate recognised standards. This includes transducers used for:

- transvaginal,
- transoesophageal and
- transrectal

sonographic examinations.

There are two relevant national standards:

1. AS/NZS 4187-2003 Cleaning, disinfecting and sterilising reusable medical and surgical instruments and equipment and maintenance of associated environments in health care facilities.⁽¹⁾
2. Infection control guidelines for the prevention of transmission of infectious diseases in the health care setting, Department of Health 2004.⁽²⁾

The Australian/New Zealand standard 4187-2003 states that “Only disinfectants labelled as “Instrument grade disinfectants” in accordance with the requirements of the Therapeutic Goods Administration are suitable for use as disinfectants for reusable instruments. A high-level instrument grade disinfectant shall be the minimum level used to effect disinfection of semi-critical instruments which contact unbroken mucous membranes that are not normally sterile”.⁽¹⁾ Intracavity ultrasound transducers are categorised as class IIb, semi-critical reusable instruments requiring high-level instrument grade disinfection.^(2, 3) Transducers that come into contact with intact skin require only intermediate-level or low-level instrument grade disinfectant.

Therefore, only chemicals registered with the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) as high-level instrument grade disinfectants for class IIb medical devices are to be used for intracavity ultrasound transducers and these include:

- Gluteraldehyde.
- Ortho-phthalaldehyde i.e. Cidex OPA (most commonly used due to larger molecular structure, providing less vapour).
- Hydrogen Peroxide, used with the Trophon EPR system (TGA approval 19/2/09).⁽⁴⁾

PLEASE NOTE that Sodium Hypochlorite (Milton) is NOT recognised by the TGA as a high level instrument grade disinfectant.

In using such compounds, please ensure the following:

- Prior to the use of disinfectants, reference shall be made to the relevant occupational health and safety regulations and Material Safety Data Sheets.
- Care shall be taken to follow each disinfectant manufacturer’s labelled conditions for the use of their specific products.
- Manufacturer’s safety recommendations should be followed.⁽¹⁾
- Each department should ensure appropriate OH & S protocols are developed and all staff are made aware of these protocols.
- The compounds may be of a hazardous nature and the user should take care at all times when mixing, using or disposing of the disinfectant.

References

1. AS/NZS 4187-2003 *Cleaning, disinfecting and sterilizing reusable medical and surgical instruments and equipment and maintenance of associated environments in health care facilities.*
2. *Infection control guidelines for the prevention of transmission of infectious diseases in the health care setting*, Department of Health, Australia 2004, Chpt.17.pp Available at: <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/icg-guidelines-index.htm>
3. *How are disinfectants regulated?* Therapeutic Goods Administration. Available at: <http://www.tga.gov.au/devices/devices.htm>.
4. TGA eBS Public summary document, Summary for ARTG Entry, 159484.

Approved for circulation by the
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