

DARTMOUTH DENTAL PRACTICE PROCEDURES



TO: **All Surgery Staff**

FROM: **Marian Roberts**

DATE: **Tuesday, 19 February 2013**

SUBJECT: **Using the Autoclave - Hazards, Safety Measures and Precautions Procedure**

Possible Hazards And Safety Measures When Using The Autoclave

- **Burns** to the user caused by hot surfaces of the load, burns to the user caused by high temperature internal surfaces of the chamber, scalds to the user caused by hot water/steam from the reservoir or from the hot water contained in the chamber on opening the door, scalds to the user caused by hot water/steam from over filling the reservoir.
- **Risk of electric shock** during maintenance procedures.
- **Infection** caused by contact with water in the reservoir if the reservoir is not drained, left to dry and recharged at regular intervals.
- **Risk of non-sterile load** if the load is not suitable for the steam sterilization cycle. All loads and loading conditions must be validated. Never use trays or cassettes without perforations as this will result in a non-sterile load.
- If instruments are not cleaned before entering the autoclave this may compromise the efficiency of the sterilization process.
- **Do not** process wrapped, sealed or porous goods or fluids in this autoclave.
- The autoclave will **discharge steam** during and at the end of the cycle, ensure the autoclave is not positioned close to heat or smoke detectors as these may be activated.
- **Do not fill the reservoir during a sterilizing cycle.**
- **Do not** cover the ventilation louvres.
- **Do not** use abrasive powders, chemicals or solutions containing chlorine to clean the autoclave.
- **Always** allow unit to cool before attempting to open the chamber door.
- If an **error display appears** during a cycle, **do not switch off power** until discharge of hot water or steam has stopped. **Do not attempt to open** the chamber door until unit has cooled.
- **Use the tray lifter** to remove the sterilized load.
- **Overheating may occur** - if this happens the **red** overheat warning lamp will illuminate. Disconnect the unit from the mains electrical supply and call a trained engineer. The maximum chamber temperature on overheat is 250°C.

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Operation of the Autoclave

- Follow the equipment manufacturers instructions when operating the autoclave. We have standardised on the Eschmann SES 2000 in all surgeries. Only the dentist or qualified (that is registered dental nurse) nurses can operate the autoclave.

Regular maintenance is carried out yearly. Report any malfunctions to the dentist or Practice Manager. Servicing is carried out by Eschmann Service Engineers (01903 765 040) or Edwards Dental Services (01803 555 739)