

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR AUTOCLAVING



Human Resources, Occupational Health and Safety
The University of Western Ontario, October 2003



DO NOT autoclave liquids containing bleach, formalin or glutaraldehyde

1

CHECK THAT STEAM IS ON

2

CHECK THAT JACKET TEMPERATURE HAS REACHED 121° C

3

CHECK CYCLE TYPE - Liquids or dry goods?
Liquids need slow venting to avoid boiling
Do not process dry goods with liquids

4

SET CYCLE TIME OR SELECT PRE-SET CYCLE - previously verified by biological ampoules

5

LOAD AUTOCLAVE CORRECTLY
Liquid containers **MUST** be inside a container to hold entire contents
Bags **MUST** be placed in a plastic tray
Bags should be loosely sealed or open

6

CLOSE AUTOCLAVE DOOR
Ensure that radial arms engage firmly - do not wrench

7

START CYCLE
Wait until autoclave reaches 121° C. The autoclave may then be left unattended until the end of the cycle. If door is leaking steam, abort cycle, re-close and tighten door further.

8

AT COMPLETION OF CYCLE
Ensure that the pressure in the chamber is zero before opening door
Stand behind door and loosen radial arms slowly
Crack door open and wait for steam to dissipate before opening door wide
Use insulated gloves to remove goods
Use **CAUTION** when removing liquids.
Ensure that the liquids have cooled so that bumping does not occur

9

SPILLS AND BREAKAGE IN AUTOCLAVE
Remove pan containing spilled contents. Remove broken glass with tongs
Re-autoclave spilled or broken items before disposal

Departmental Autoclave Contact: _____ UWO Ext.: _____