

Handling and Safety

Sharps



Protect the tips of all sharp instruments with silicone or rubber tubing. Intravenous infusion tubing or tubing from "butterfly" intravenous needles may be used.

Needles



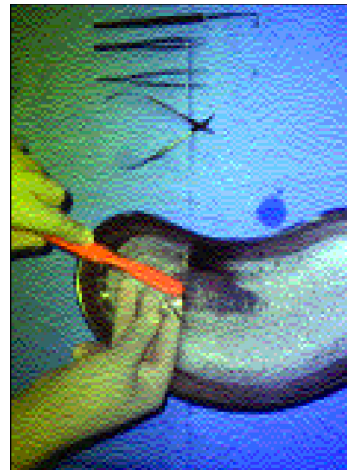
Discard used needles immediately after use. Place in a receptacle used only for this purpose. Seal and incinerate the receptacle when almost full. Do not over-fill. Preferably use small receptacles and dispose of them daily.

Remember!

- Never re-sheath a disposable needle
- Always use artery forceps to remove a blade from a Bard Parker handle
- Provide a gallipot on the theatre trolley to collect used needles and blades
- Do not touch the tips of any instrument
- Never throw an instrument

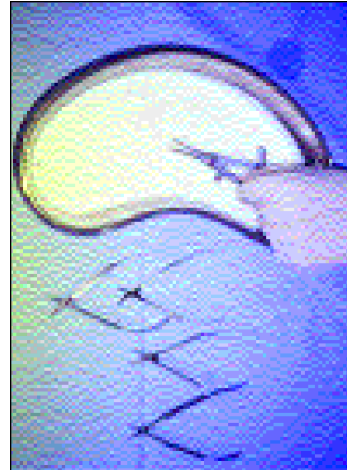
Maintenance

Cleaning



Use a soft toothbrush and hot soapy water to thoroughly clean each instrument, individually, in its open position.

Lubricating



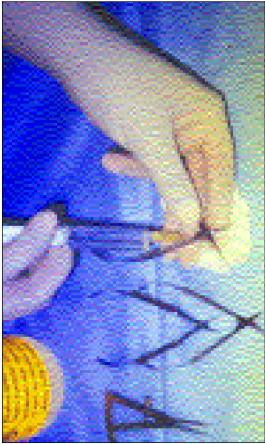
Use a lubricant immediately after cleaning hinged instruments to prevent stiff joints and inhibit rusting. Dip the instruments only and then rinse – do not leave to soak. Down's Surgical Instrument Lube or Dixey's Surgi-Slip are recommended.

Drying



Instruments must be dried thoroughly before storing. Dry gauze (used cautiously), or a hairdryer may be used.

Oiling



Stored hinged instruments need oiling weekly. Use a 2 ml syringe and 21G needle to draw up the oil and a 25G needle to apply the oil to the joints. Surplus oil should be wiped off carefully with gauze. Ordinary sewing machine oil is recommended.

Inspection



Inspect instruments for alignment and sharpness under a good light and magnification.



Check the lumen is patent (not blocked) by flushing through with clean hot water.

Storage, Transportation and Security

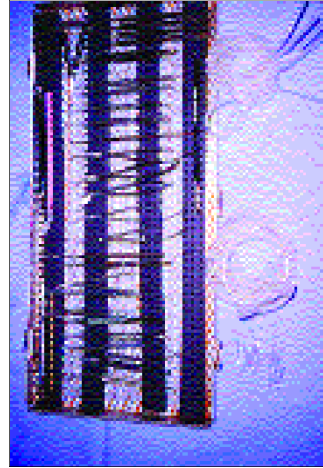
Silicone or rubber protectors must be used on sharp instruments when in storage or transit.

Shelves



Glass shelves, in a lockable cupboard, provide for secure storage and checking. Never pile instruments on top of each other. A well ventilated room is recommended.

Trays



Individual slots in the tray hold a single instrument. Instruments must not touch each other. The tray can be used for storage, transportation and during sterilization procedures.

Cases



Cases may be metal or plastic and contain a protective silicone mat. The case can be used for storage, transportation and during sterilization procedures.

Rolls



Rolls, made of strong fabric, are inexpensive. Each pocket holds a single instrument. Secure the roll with ribbon or cord – not elastic. Use rolls for instrument storage and transportation only.

Sue Stevens, Ophthalmic Resource Coordinator/Nurse Advisor, IRC/CEH, LSHTM, Keppel Street, London WC1E 7HT
Ingrid Cox, Training Advisor, CBM International, P.O. Box 58004, City Square 00200, Nairobi, Kenya

This poster highlights the main principles discussed in a full article in *Community Eye Health*, Vol.13, Issue No. 35, 40–41, 2000

Photos – Ingrid and Maxine Cox