



all about indicator strips...

HOW

do I know if my sterilizer is working?

How do you know if your instruments are safe to release and use? For each load run in your steam sterilizer, how do you know if the correct temperature has been reached for the right amount of time, and with the correct level of steam saturation?

Your weekly spore test monitors your sterilizer, but with one significant limitation --- lag time. Considering the mail transit time, spore test processing and incubation, it may take a week or longer to find out if your spore test has failed. By the time you find out that your spore test has failed, all of the instruments processed in that failed load have been used.

WHAT

more can I do?

By using a **Type 5 integrating indicator strip** in every cassette, packet or pouch that is sterilized --- you immediately know if all sterilization parameters have been met. No other chemical indicator gives you this immediate read-out information. The Type 5 strip provides you with a definitive pass or fail result allowing for the confident release of sterilized instruments long before your spore test results are available.

WHAT

are indicator strips?

Type 5 integrating indicator strips are chemical indicators that are used in steam sterilizers. These strips offer the highest level of sterility assurance from a chemical indicator and are used to verify that ALL critical steam sterilization parameters have been met. In addition, Type 5 indicators meet the stringent performance requirements of the ANSI/AAMI/ISO chemical indicator standard 11140-1:2014.

WHY

use these strips?

- **quality assurance**
provides verification that ALL steam sterilization parameters were met
- **patient safety & peace of mind**
allows for confident use of sterilized instruments

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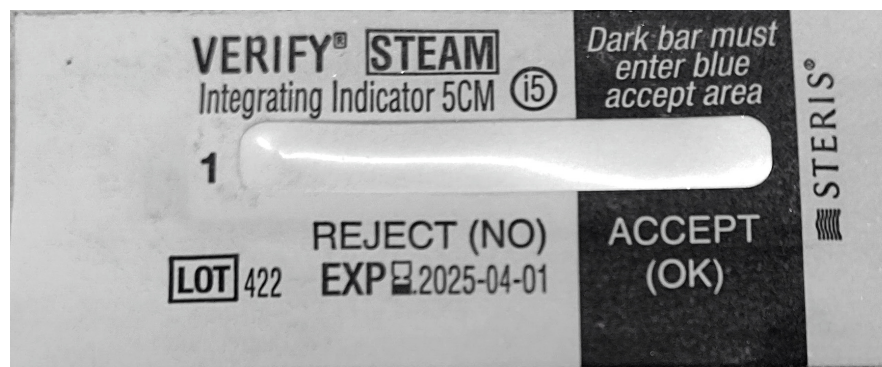
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HOW

do indicator strips work?

The Type 5 indicator strip consists of a paper-film-foil packet that contains a paper wick and chemical tablet. The chemical tablet is steam and temperature sensitive. During the sterilization cycle, the steam penetrates the packet. The tablet melts and soaks into the paper and migrates as a colored bar along the strip. The migration is visible through a window marked REJECT or ACCEPT.

The extent of migration depends on steam, time and temperature. The rate at which the bar moves is correlated to the kill time of a biological indicator. When the bar has traveled the length of the strip and enters the "ACCEPT (OK)" area, this confirms that ALL critical steam sterilization parameters have been met.



HOW

are indicator strips used?

The CDC recommends the use of an internal chemical indicator in each package that is sterilized. To properly use a Type 5 indicator strip, place one in the center of the pouch/packet/cassette to be sterilized. Do not place any items directly on the strip. Process the package according to manufacturer directions then store for future use.

When the package is opened for use, examine the strip. When the dark colored bar has traveled through the REJECT (NO) window and into the ACCEPT (OK) window, the instruments are safe to use for your patients. Alternating dark and light bands of colors may occur. Any color bar in the ACCEPT (OK) window indicates a pass.

Indicator strips do NOT replace the need for certified biological monitoring, but instead serve as an instant visual confirmation of safe sterilization of instruments.

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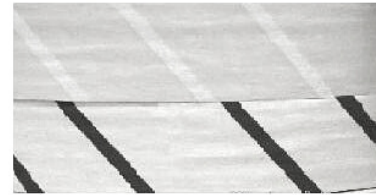
WHY

not use tape instead?

Tape does not indicate that ALL sterilization parameters were met.

Autoclave tape is a Type 1 chemical indicator. It is an external indicator only that allows for a quick visual identification of what instruments are processed versus unprocessed. When the tape turns color, it only indicates that the package has been directly exposed to the sterilization process.

Unlike the Type 5 integrating indicator strip, it does not indicate that time, temperature or steam saturation has occurred.



WHAT

is the cost?

With our SMS Bundle & Save discount, you receive 1000 Type 5 indicator strips for \$200 and your cost is 20 cents per strip. Without the SMS Bundle & Save discount, your cost 25 cents per strip.

If you are currently purchasing Type 5 indicator strips, please check your cost per strip and see how it compares to our pricing.

WHAT

additional resources are available?

The following brief videos by a variety of manufacturers may be useful to review additional information on Type 5 chemical indicators.

videos

- Hu-Friedy Steam Sterilization Integrators
- 3M Attest Steam Chemical Integrator, Type 5
- How to use 3M Chemical Indicators (Type 5) and Tape (Type 1)

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