

Standard Operating Procedure

Sterilising Infant Feeding Equipment on Neonatal and Transitional Care Unit

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Approved by:	Paediatric Governance
Approved by Medicines Safety Committee: <i>Where medicines included in guideline</i>	N/A
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Date of Review: This is the most current document and is to be used until a revised version is available	20th August 2028

Aim and scope of Standard Operating Procedure

This standard operating procedure details steps on how infant feeding equipment should be cleaned and sterilised to reduce the risk of infection for babies up to 1 year of age. This applies to feeding equipment suitable for microwave steam sterilising.
Aligns with the following Trust guidelines:

Milk kitchen Standards - <http://whitsweb/KeyDocs/KeyDocs/DownloadFile/3650>

Neonatal Infant Feeding Policy - <http://whitsweb/KeyDocs/KeyDocs/DownloadFile/3942>

Target Staff Categories

Neonatal Nursing Staff
Housekeeper

Key amendments to this Standard Operating Procedure

Date	Amendment	Approved by:
21/07/2025	New Document	Paediatric Governance Meeting

Background

Microwave sterilising using a single user bag is the recommended method of sterilising infant feeding equipment such as bottles, teats and dummies in a hospital environment.

[BDA-guideline-for-storage-and-handling-of-EBM-and-DBM.pdf](#)

<u>Contents</u>	Page
Section 1. Standard Operating Procedure and Responsibilities	2 & 3
Section 2. Training and Education	3
Section 3. Monitoring Compliance and Effectiveness	3
Section 4. Appendices	4

Section 1 - Standard Operating Procedure and Responsibilities

Instructions for use of sterilising bag (see appendices)

Washing of feeding equipment:

Before sterilising all equipment needs to be thoroughly washed in hot soapy water

Provide parent/ baby with:

- Clean area with running water to wash items
- Single person use washing bowl
- Single person use toothbrush
- Washing up liquid
- Hot water
- Sterilising bag

Single use items with this symbol  should not be sterilised

Method:

- Bottles and equipment should be taken apart and each component washed
- Using toothbrush scrub all internal and external areas of equipment in hot soapy water
- Rinse equipment in cold running water

Sterilising using a microwave bag:

- Sterilise equipment just before use
- Ensure sterilising bag is labelled with baby's name and hospital number
- Bags can be reused up to 20 times
- Place all the equipment requiring sterilisation into the sterilising bag
- Measure 60ml of cold tap water and add this into bag, then seal bag
- Place bag in centre of microwave
- Set microwave on full power for time indicated in guide below:

**1.5 minutes at >1100 w or
3 minutes at 800-1100 w or
5 minutes at 600-750 w**

Allow to cool for 2 minutes

- Remove bag from microwave holding the cold corner to avoid scalds
- Empty out the hot water via the steam vent in opposite corner
- Wash and dry hands before removing equipment from bag
- If you have sterilised a bottle and teat remove from bag and make the feed

- Tick each use on bag with a permanent marker pen
- Store wash bowl, bag and toothbrush in baby's cupboard or drawer

All parents who are formula feeding should have a discussion and demonstration on making up formula milk safely and sterilising prior to discharge. Signpost parents to:

<https://www.nhs.uk/start-for-life/baby/feeding-your-baby/bottle-feeding/how-to-make-up-a-feed/>

Cleaning Instructions:

- The Ardo microwave sterilising bags should be replaced after 20 uses (check manufacturers guidance)
- The bags are for single person use only
- Dry the interior of the microwave with paper towel after use
- Clean the interior, door handle and control pad on microwave between use with Clinnell wipes
- Record daily cleaning schedule

Section 2 - Training and Education

Education/ Training Need	Staff group	Method of training/education	Responsibility for training	Timescale to complete
Dissemination of SOP	Neonatal Nursing Staff	SOP available on intranet Neonatal Induction.	Neonatal Nursing team Neonatal Clinical Educator.	As SOP updates available/or on commencement of employment

Section 3 - Monitoring Compliance and Effectiveness

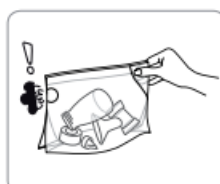
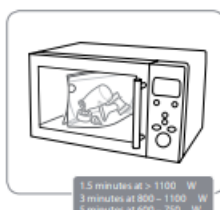
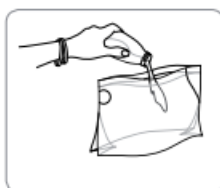
The compliance and effectiveness of this SOP will be monitored in the following ways:

- Any changes in practice will be referenced against the content of this SOP and any changes deemed necessary will be made.
- The SOP will be subject to regular review as detailed below.
- This guideline will be informally monitored by the Neonatal Unit Manager. If there is any cause for concern a full audit will be carried out.

Section 4 - Appendices:

1) Ardo easy clean microwave bag user instructions

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INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE EASY CLEAN MICROWAVE BAG

Instructions for use

1. Clean all parts after use with warm soapy water and rinse them with clean water.
2. Add 60 ml (2 ounces) of water to the bag.
3. Place the parts to be steam-cleaned in the bag. Seal the bag tightly with the pressure fastening.
4. Place the bag in the centre of the microwave.
5. Set the microwave to the correct power and time and start it:
 - 1.5 minutes at > 1100 W
 - 3 minutes at 800 – 1100 W
 - 5 minutes at 600 – 750 W
6. Open the microwave when it has finished and let the bag cool down for at least 2 minutes.
7. Pick up the bag using the safe grip and remove it from the microwave.
8. Hold the bag away from you and carefully pour out the remaining water through the steam vent.
9. Open the bag and remove the steam-cleaned parts.
10. The bag can be used up to 20 times. Tick a box after each use so you can check how many times are left.

Warnings

- Always add at least 60 ml (2 ounces) of water to the bag to avoid damaging the parts.
- Do not overfill the bag.
- Do not place the bag into the microwave on a metal rack.
- Do not exceed the stated times for steam cleaning to prevent the parts from damage.
- If the microwave does not have a turntable, turn the bag halfway through.
- **Caution: when removing the bag from the microwave and opening it, hot steam or water may escape.**
- Only use the bag with items deemed suitable for microwaving.
- Do not use the bag in a conventional oven and do not grill it.
- Store the bag out of the reach of children.
- To prevent limescale, you can add a drop of citric acid.
- Certain parts may discolour when used. This has no effect on their function.
- Follow the instructions for the microwave.

2) Video of Ardo easy clean microwave bags

<https://vimeo.com/837912562?fl=pl&fe=sh>