



TITLE: Prepping & sterilizing supplies for IVC cages

SOP Category: Gnotobiotic

CMR SOP #: 4.18

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Effective Date: 11/19/24

Approval: *LaTisha V. Moody, DVM, DACLAM*

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SCOPE:

This document describes the procedures to be followed within the gnotobiotic facility to maintain germ-free status of the colony. This SOP applies to all Animal Care Staff (ACS), ACS Supervisors (ACSS), Veterinary Staff (VS), and Research Staff members (RS) at the Rutgers University Gnotobiotic facilities.

OBJECTIVE:

The objective is to describe procedures to prepare supplies that cannot be easily chemically sterilized.

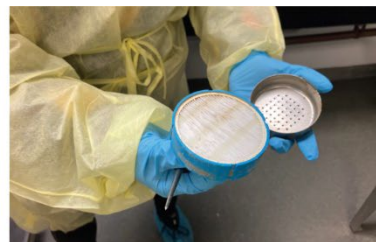
PROCEDURES:

Prepping instruments

1. Place dry and clean instruments into an appropriately sized sterilization pouch. Example sizes are listed below.
 - a. Scissors, forceps: Medline 5.3" x 10"
 - b. Oral gavage needle: Medicom SafeSeal Quattro 3.5" x 5.25"

Cleaning and prepping in-cage HEPA filters

1. Separate the blue plastic HEPA filter compartment from the metal bottom using a small awl or needle-nosed pliers. Inspect the filter for defects and discard unit if present. Avoid touching the white HEPA filter material.



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2. Shake out bedding and food debris into a trash can. Wash the metal bottom with soap and water and, if necessary, use a permanent black marker to re-mark the number of times the unit has been autoclaved on the side of the metal bottom. If the blue plastic compartment is soiled, wipe away debris with a disinfectant wipe.



3. With a permanent black marker, update the number of times the unit has been autoclaved by filling in the next open circle on top of the blue plastic compartment and increasing the Roman numeral on the side of the metal bottom. Reassemble the unit and insert it into a sealed 5.3"x 10" autoclave bag. Insert this inner bag along with a SHORT OK Sterilization Indicator strip into a larger, sealed autoclave bag (e.g. 7.5" x 13"). Date the outer bag with the autoclave date. Note the opposing directions of the inner and outer bags. In-cage HEPA filters must be discarded after 12 autoclave cycles or sooner if extremely soiled, HEPA filters in a flooded cage, or damaged.



Prepping Tyvek sleeves

1. Place 1 pair of Tyvek sleeves into a large sized 12" x 18" sterilization pouch with an OK Sterilization Indicator strip. Write the date the package will be autoclaved on the package.

Prepping glass test tubes

1. Obtain dry & clean glass test tubes and caps. If there is still writing on the test tubes, remove with hydrogen peroxide wipes.
2. Place 18 test tubes into a medium sized sterilization pouch and an OK Sterilization Indicator strip. Seal the bag and write the date the package will be autoclaved on the outside.

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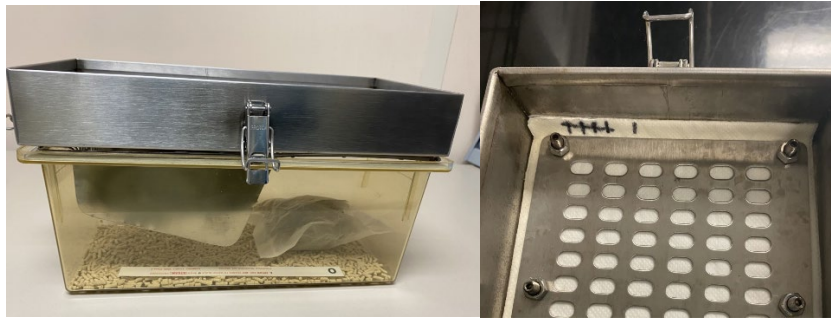
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3. Place 18 black caps into a small sterilization pouch. Place an OK Sterilization Indicator strip into the bag, seal the bag, and write the date it will be autoclaved on the outside.

Prepping NKP Isotec gnotobiotic transport cages

1. Place 50g of BioFresh bedding, and a torn EnviroPak in a clean NKP Isotec cage.
2. Place the wire bar in the cage and place the top upside down. Use a sharpie to make a tic mark on the filter paper once to track how many times the cage has been autoclaved.
 - a. The metal lid has DW-4 filter medium which can be autoclaved up to 20 times. Once the medium has been used 20 autoclave cycles, it must be replaced.



3. Use precut blue sterile drape 45"x 45" size and wrap an inner and outer layer over the NKP cage. Refer to *SOP #4.14 Prepping & Sterilizing Wrapped SPP Cages* for wrapping instructions.
4. Place autoclave tape labeled with the date NKP cage will be autoclaved.

Prepping sterile crates

1. Place enough BioFresh bedding to cover the bottom of the container with an OK Sterilization Indicator strip, and a torn EnviroPak in the JAX crate.
 - a. If you use a long crate, place the divider inside.
2. Place the top on the crate and make sure it is closed and sealed.
3. Place autoclave tape on the outside of the crate on the lid covering with the date it will be autoclaved.



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Shelf life of autoclaved supplies

The autoclaved supplies are sterile for up to 6 months from the autoclaving date, provided the pouch or drape remains undamaged during storage.