

STERILIZATION MONITORING SERVICE

NEWSLETTER

HOW

do you know
if your 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 you 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.

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all about INDICATOR STRIPS

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 indicator strips 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 critical sterilization parameters were met (steam, time, temperature)
- **patient safety & peace of mind**
allows for confident use of sterilized instruments

HOW do indicator strips work?

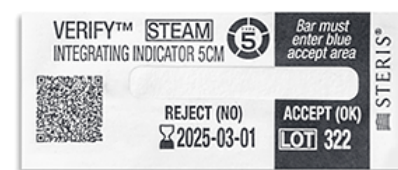
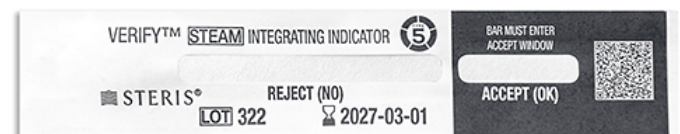
The Type 5 indicator strip consists of a **paper-film-foil packet that contains a paper wick and chemical tablet**. The chemical tablet is steam and temperature sensitive. During the sterilization cycle, the steam penetrates the packet. The tablet melts and soaks into the paper and migrates as a colored 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.



IMPORTANT NOTE

Indicator strips do NOT replace the need for certified biological monitoring, but instead serve as an instant visual confirmation of safe sterilization of instruments. In Ohio, the Ohio State Dental Board (OSDB) mandates the weekly biological monitoring of all sterilization equipment used in the dental office.

WHY not use tape instead?

If you think that using autoclave tape is the same as using a Type 5 indicator strip --- it is not. Autoclave tape does not indicate that ALL sterilization parameters were met. **Autoclave tape is a Type 1 chemical indicator.** It is a "process" indicator that responds to only one variable, heat. It is an **external indicator** and only **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?

If you are currently purchasing Type 5 indicator strips, please check your cost per strip and see how it compares to our SMS pricing. A variety of manufacturers offer Type 5 integrating indicators ranging in price from \$0.26 to \$0.94 per strip. We offer **Steris brand VERIFY™ Steam Integrating Indicator Type 5 strips** that are manufactured in Mentor, Ohio. With our SMS Bundle & Save discount, **you receive 1000 Type 5 indicator strips for \$200 and your cost is \$0.20 per strip.** Without the SMS Bundle & Save discount, your cost is \$0.25 cents per strip.

WHAT additional resources are available?

The following brief YouTube **video resources** may be useful to review additional information on Type 5 chemical indicators.

Understanding Class 5 Integrators

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f0nR9uSkeOM>

Hu-Friedy Steam Sterilization Integrators

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZTCqm5Z4u-o&t=31s>

3M Attest Steam Chemical Integrator, Type 5

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dH9M1-yd1ow>

How to use 3M Chemical Indicators (Types 5 & 1)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-TjkZ3QLmgY>

WHAT'S NEW



NEW ONLINE ORDERING

SMS online ordering is available 24/7.

Log into your current SMS account for secure, convenient, and easy-to-use online ordering. **Your online order is processed more rapidly than a phone order or order received by mail.** Payment is handled by a secured third-party and shipping status can be checked online in real time.



NEW LOOK

The OSU College of Dentistry website has a fresh new look! For consistency, our SMS web pages have been reformatted and now have the same new look as well.



NEW RESOURCES

Visit go.osu.edu/sms and click on the **SMS RESOURCES** page. You will find a new section titled **"In the News"**.

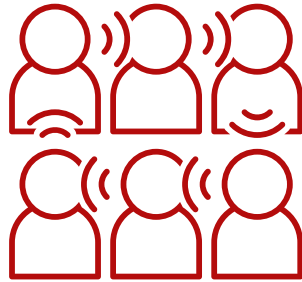
Check out the recently released 2023 updated video of **"If Saliva Were Red"**. Watch the video and earn free CE credit after completing an online assessment. To learn the latest on DUWL --- review the recent **CDC Update on Dental Unit Waterlines**.



NEW BARCODES

COMING SOON --- barcodes will be added to your SMS account labels to streamline our test entering process.

RUMOR HAS IT...



RUMOR # 1

Where is the free CE course? We must have missed it and now our office staff will not earn the free credits.

Absolutely **NOT TRUE**.

Please check our **SMS Free CE** web page for updates. Our free online self-study CE courses are offered four times per year --- in **March, June, September** and **December**. Unlike previous SMS CE courses, **each course in 2023 will now be available for 12 weeks**. Beginning in March 2023, enjoy using Learning Stream (an enhanced online CE platform) to improve your user experience. To complete the course at no charge, you must submit your answer form by the deadline. Once a course deadline has passed, courses may be purchased from the College of Dentistry Office of Continuing Dental Education.

RUMOR # 2

The OSDB just reduced the biennial CE requirements for dentists and hygienists effective in April 2023.

Definitely **TRUE**.

Effective April 2023, the total CE hours required by the OSDB has been reduced for dentists and hygienists. For this current biennium --- earn 16 of **30 required credits as a dentist** and 16 of **20 required credits as a hygienist** by completing SMS online CE courses. This represents a substantial reduction in your annual and biennium CE costs. Based on CE cost of \$25 / credit, you can save \$200 per year and \$400 per biennium in your out-of-pocket CE costs.

RUMOR # 3

If there is a lengthy mail delay, it can affect the spore strip that I sent in.

So, so, so **NOT TRUE**.

When you place the spore strip in the envelope to mail it, the spores on the strip are either dead or alive. The transit **time in the mail cannot kill spores, or, transform dead spores into live ones.**

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