

AIDS : guidelines for unregistered chiropractors : don't die of ignorance / prepared by the Department of Health and Social Security and the Central Office of Information.

Contributors

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GOVERNMENT INFORMATION 1987

AIDS



GUIDELINES FOR
UNREGISTERED
CHIROPODISTS

DON'T DIE OF IGNORANCE

WHAT IS THE RISK?

No one has ever been known to catch the AIDS virus from chiropody. And no one should in future either, if the simple procedures given in this leaflet are always followed.

The risk involved with any one patient is remote. But in the interests both of your patients and of yourself, safe procedures are essential because of the number of patients you work with every day and because it is not possible to tell whether a person is infected or not.

Because the AIDS virus is carried in blood, it is vital that any equipment which has been contaminated with blood or serum is sterilized before re-use.

Although this leaflet has been published as part of the Government publicity about AIDS, the procedures followed will also protect your patients and yourself against hepatitis B, a more familiar but also serious risk.

AIDS AND HEPATITIS B

AIDS is caused by a virus which damages the body's defences against infection. AIDS virus infection is spread almost entirely by sexual intercourse or the transfer of blood from an infected person to another.

Hepatitis B is also caused by a virus and is transmitted in much the same way as the AIDS virus. It can produce severe illness with jaundice.

RECOMMENDED PROCEDURES

Do not test instruments on your own skin either before or after using them on a patient.



Whenever possible use pre-sterilized disposable scalpels and blades. They should be used once only, and then discarded.

Re-usable scalpels and burrs must be sterilized, as should metal forceps and dishes.

IMPORTANT

Remember it is as essential to follow these procedures if you work in patients' homes as it is if you are surgery based.

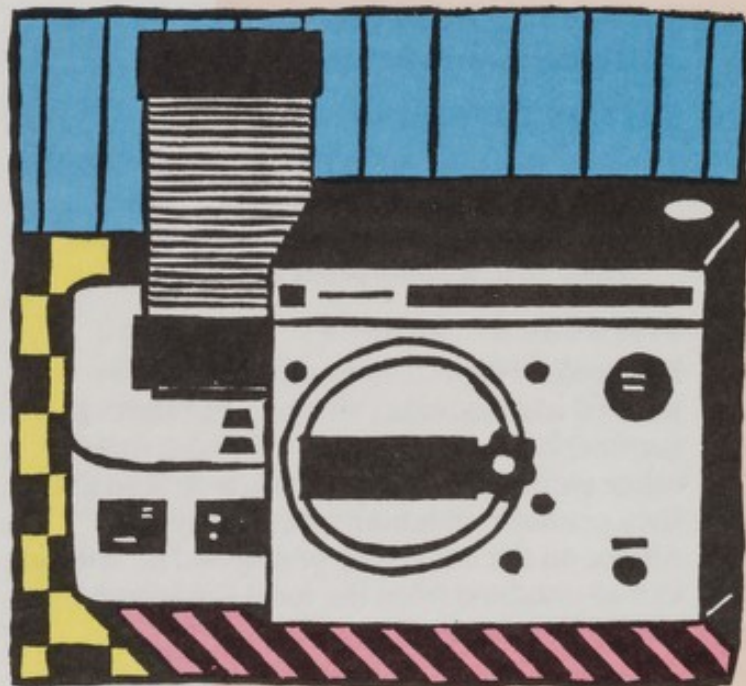
STERILIZATION

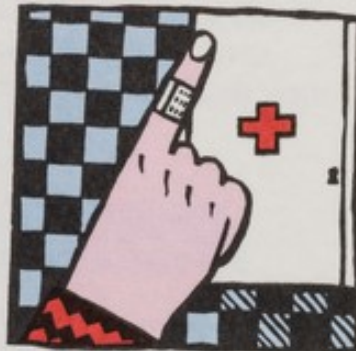
The best way to sterilize instruments is in an autoclave. The autoclave you choose should be fully automatic, so that all you need to do is top it up with water, close it and press a button.

At the time of going to print (November 1987), a low cost pressure sterilizer is under development which may be a suitable alternative to an autoclave. Your Environmental Health Department will be able to advise on its availability.

A recommended glass bead sterilizer is a possible alternative for very light objects which can withstand heating at high temperatures.

Ultraviolet (UV) cabinets are not capable of sterilizing instruments properly.





GENERAL HYGIENE

- Keep everything clean. Floors should be regularly cleaned, carpets vacuumed and surfaces washed.
- Wash your hands between patients.
- Disinfect work surfaces regularly.

CUTS ON YOUR HANDS

- Cover existing wounds with a waterproof dressing. Wash fresh cuts, encourage bleeding under running water and then cover with a waterproof dressing.

DISPOSAL OF 'SHARPS'

Be careful when throwing away sharp or pointed instruments ('sharps'). Put them in a commercially available 'sharps' container or other secure box or plastic bottle first so that they cannot accidentally injure anyone. Advice on the collection or disposal of 'sharps' can be obtained from the local Environmental Health Department.

FURTHER INFORMATION

This leaflet gives general guidance only. More information and advice is available from your local Environmental Health Department.

Other leaflets in this series include:

Guidelines for acupuncturists

Guidelines for ear piercers

Guidelines for electrolysis

Guidelines for hairdressers and barbers

Guidelines for tattooists

There is a free, attractive poster available which covers the general hygiene points made in this leaflet.

If you would like to order more leaflets or the poster, phone 0800 555 777 (24 hours). You won't be charged for your call.