

STERILISATION METHODS AT HOME

Boiling

Boiling is the preferred option for sterilising bottles and other infant feeding equipment. Boiling gives consistent and reliable results if the following steps are taken.

- Rinse bottles, teats and caps in cold water then wash in hot soapy water with a bottle / teat brush, rinse again in cold water before sterilisation
- Place utensils, including bottles, teats and caps in a large saucepan on the back burner of the Stove. Cover all utensils with water, making sure to eliminate all air bubbles. Bring water to the boil and boil for 5 minutes. Turn off – do not allow to boil dry. Allow the equipment to cool in the saucepan until it is hand hot and then remove the equipment
- Store equipment that is not being used straight away in a clean container in the fridge
- Use all equipment within 24 hours of being boiled.

Chemical Sterilisation

A chemical sterilant is an antibacterial solution that comes in liquid or tablet form.

Chemical sterilisation is not as effective as boiling unless bottles and other equipment are meticulously cleaned.

- Rinse bottles, teats and caps in cold water then wash in hot soapy water with a bottle/teat brush, rinse again in cold water
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully when making up the solution to ensure correct dilution
- Discard the solution after 24 hours
- Thoroughly scrub the container in warm soapy water and make up new solution
- Make sure all equipment is plastic (metal corrodes when left in chemical sterilant)
- Completely submerge everything, make sure there are no air bubbles
- Leave equipment in solution for at least the recommended time
- Equipment can be left in solution until it is needed
- Allow equipment to drain – do not rinse, as there will be a risk of re-contamination

Steam Sterilisers

Steam sterilisers are automatic units that raise the temperature quickly to the range that kills harmful germs

- Rinse bottles, teats and caps in cold water then wash in hot soapy water with a bottle/teat brush, rinse again in cold water
- Thoroughly cleaned equipment is then placed in steamer
- Water added to the manufacturer's instructions and switch unit / microwave on
- Unit / microwave switches itself off when sterilisation is complete
- Store equipment that is not being used straight away in a clean container in the fridge
- Stored equipment will remain sterile for 24 hours

Reference: National Health and Medical Research Council "Infant Feeding Guideline Information for Health Workers"
April 2024



Created by: C.Dunn (NUM) June 2013, reviewed by K.Abood/M Lee.

Version 2: C.Dunn(NUM) March 2015

Version 3-Updated by K.Abood (LC, CNC) May 2018, reviewed by V Gardam(NE)

Version 4 – Updated and reviewed TH (NUM) VG (CME) June 2019. V5 updated/reviewed K Abood(LC) VG(ME) July 25