



# AUTOCLAVE SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR THE WORKPLACE

## General Procedures

**Liquids:** Liquids must be in containers with two times the capacity to accommodate for boiling during the cycle. ex: 1 L of media will require a flask of 2 L. Never seal a liquid container with a cork or stopper. Use foil or leave screw caps loosely fitted on top of the bottle.

**Waste and Sharps:** Sharps are to be put into a puncture-resistant disposable container, not an autoclave bag. Never overfill the autoclave bag. When the bag is full, it should be handled from the top.

**The Autoclave:** Never overload your autoclave. Never mix clean items with contaminated items during the same cycle. Use indicator tape with each load to verify it has been autoclaved at a high enough temperature.



## Loading Procedures

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Wear lab coat, gloves and preferably safety glasses when loading autoclave.

**Inserting Materials:** Load *autoclavable material* in polypropylene, polycarbonate or stainless steel secondary container. Close door tightly.

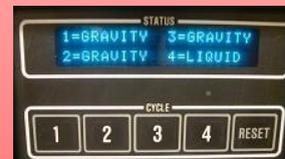


### Autoclave Cycles:

**LIQUID:** (*slow exhaust*) Steam is exhausted slowly at end of cycle, allowing super-heated liquids to cool. (**Media**)

**GRAVITY/DRY:** (*fast exhaust*) Chamber is at set temperature for set period of time. At end of cycle, valve opens and chamber rapidly returns to atmospheric pressure. (**Glassware, Waste**)

**Time:** Select time for cycle (at least 20 minutes). Press “START” or “RUN CYCLE.”



## Unloading Procedures

**OPENING DOOR:** Make sure that gauge is at 0 PSIG before opening door. Wearing lab coat, heat-resistant gloves and preferably safety glasses, stand at arms length and slowly open door one inch.

**REMOVAL:** Let autoclave vent and cool for at least *1-2 minutes* after cycle, then remove autoclaved materials.



## Maintenance

**Out of Service:** If the autoclave is not operating properly, please notify the vendor and post the “DO NOT USE” sign on the front of the autoclave to avoid others from using the machine.

**Spore Testing:** Conduct sterility testing on a regular basis using *Bacillus stearothermophilus* spore strips.