

Practical Sterilising Solutions for the Veterinary Practice

In the veterinary market, no single steriliser technology meets all the requirements needed by the vet practice. The type B steam autoclave has been the traditional workhorse, being able to turnaround most solid and hollow instruments within an hour or so. However, autoclaves are not suitable for a number of thermo-labile instruments (such as flexible endoscopes, laparoscopy tools and some plastics) and items like implants which can be attacked by steam. Another downside of autoclaving is the progressive dulling and corrosion of instruments over time, caused by steam. The use of Ethylene Oxide (EtO) sterilisers provides a good solution for the sterilising of thermo-labile instruments and heat sensitive materials but the process takes significantly longer than autoclaving making it impractical and costly for turning around general instruments. EtO is also not suitable for sterilising certain types of implants.

Enter a new sterilisation technology, High Velocity Hot Air (HVHA). Using no water, steam, vacuum or chemicals, HVHA sterilises instruments in as little as 12 minutes from door closed to door open. Using deturbulized hot air at 190°C, microbiological kill is transferred by conduction to all instrument surfaces. Instruments stay sharper for longer with no corrosion, thanks to no steam. HVHA is also extremely energy efficient, using 85% less energy than a similar sized autoclave. Further cost savings are made in DI/RO water and pressure vessel insurance (not required), with reduced daily, weekly and monthly maintenance. HVHA sterilisers are extremely efficient in processing both hollow and solid instruments and a number of implants with easily achievable four cycles per hour.

The RH-Pro11 HVHA steriliser has a large 38L rectangular chamber accommodating four large trays 229 x 381mm (9 x 15") with a validated load capacity of 3.2Kg. There are 3 program cycles:

6 minutes	Unwrapped instruments
8 minutes	Unwrapped handpieces and drills
12 minutes	Wrapped instruments, handpieces and drills



So, what is the most efficient and practical sterilising setup for the veterinary practice today? Using a combination of HVHA and EtO is demonstrably the optimal solution, providing the speed of turnaround with lowest operational cost of HVHA with the ability to sterilise heat sensitive instruments and materials with EtO.