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Certified Orthodontic Assistant Examination

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Question: 1

What is the initial step for instrument cleaning?

- A. Rinse instruments, scrub them with a brush, and place into a holding solution.
- B. Place instruments in an ultrasonic cleaner for processing.
- C. Rinse instruments and wrap them for processing in an autoclave.
- D. Wrap instruments in an approved sterilization wrap.

Answer: B

Explanation:

Place instruments in an ultrasonic cleaner for processing. This initial step in sterilization processing can include the use of a holding solution to prevent blood from drying on instruments. Hand scrubbing with a brush or sponge is never ideal because of the risk of puncture injuries to dental staff. Instruments cannot be wrapped for the autoclave until they have had debris removed, washed, and rinsed off.

Question: 2

When handling biopsy specimens, what should the dental healthcare worker do to decrease the chance of cross-contamination?

- A. Label the container with a hazard sticker during storage.
- B. Transfer the specimen in a sturdy container with a secure lid.
- C. Keep the specimen stored in the refrigerator until it is ready to ship.
- D. Return the container to circulation for future specimens after the lab has performed the required testing and returned the container and results.

Answer: B

Explanation:

When handling biopsy specimens, the items need to be in a container that is leak-proof, sturdy, and has a secure lid. This container must have a biohazard symbol on it as well during storage, transport, and disposal. The specimen should not be automatically kept in a refrigerator during storage unless indicated by the medical lab that is contracted with the dentist. Once a container has been used, it should be properly disposed of to avoid the potential of cross-contamination if that container were to be reused.

Question: 3

Latex or non-latex gloves are a barrier for the hands of all dental professionals. Which of the following must be considered to retain the integrity of the gloves?

- A. Washing with detergents can cause "wicking" to occur.

- B.The length of a person's nails should not be considered in determining size.
- C.Gloves should be kept in a cool storage place no more than two months.
- D.None of these are concerns.

Answer: A

Explanation:

Washing with detergents can cause "wicking" to occur. There are inherent defects in the natural material of gloves that can be exploited by opportunistic bacteria seeking a host. A dental staff member must be careful not to let her nails grow too long or wear any kind of jewelry that may puncture or cause micro-tears in the gloves.

Question: 4

What is the correct protocol to follow when considering decontamination procedures for digital x-ray sensors?

- A.After use, the sensor should be immersed in a high-level disinfectant for the time specified by the manufacturer for sterilization.
- B.The sensor should be covered during use with a barrier and then removed from the cable cord and placed in the autoclave for sterilization.
- C.The sensors should be covered with barriers during use and then disinfected with an intermediate-level disinfectant
- D.The sensors should be placed in the autoclave sterilizer on the flash cycle after being wiped down with an intermediate-level disinfectant

Answer: C

Explanation:

The best and most effective way for a dental auxiliary to prevent cross-contamination from occurring during the use of digital radiographic sensors is to place the sensor(s) in barriers during use, and afterwards, wipe down the sensor(s) with an intermediate-level disinfectant. These sensors are unable to be sterilized, as the heat, steam, and/or chemicals will damage the delicate parts, nor can these items be submerged in any type of liquid.

Question: 5

Digital x-ray sensors are used on multiple patients per day. How are these kept in aseptic condition?

- A.Providing continuous wipe downs with alcohol.
- B.Replacing sensors 2-3 times per year to prevent bioburden.
- C.Soaking the sensors in a tuberculocidal solution overnight once per week.
- D.Covering the sensors with a plastic sleeve during each patient use.

Answer: D

Explanation:

Covering the sensors with a plastic sleeve during each patient use. Sensors should never be wiped with alcohol since this can cause cracking in the cords and damage to the sensor itself. They should never be soaked in any type of solution for disinfection. These digital components are very costly to replace and most practices must train every staff member to handle them with care.

Question: 6

What type(s) of personal protective equipment should be worn when the dental auxiliary is working with alginate impression material?

- A.Mask.
- B.Mask and eyewear.
- C.Mask, eyewear, and gloves.
- D.No personal protective equipment is needed, as this is harmless when in powder form.

Answer: C

Explanation:

When working with alginate material, the dental auxiliary must wear a mask, eyewear, and gloves to protect themselves from the fine powders that may be released as they are preparing the alginate material for use. It is good practice to always wear gloves when working with dental products to prevent these products from being absorbed into the skin, and also to wear eyewear to prevent anything from splashing into the eyes.

Question: 7

Which of the following is NOT included in the bloodborne pathogens exposure control plan that should be implemented at each dental office?

- A.Hepatitis B vaccination requirements.
- B.Exposure determinations.
- C.Hazardous waste disposal.
- D.Exposure incident protocols.

Answer: C

Explanation:

A bloodborne pathogens exposure control plan should include exposure determinations, methods of compliance with the plan, hepatitis B vaccination records and any other vaccination records, engineering controls, and work practice controls. Hazardous waste disposal is not part of the bloodborne pathogens standard and therefore is not included in this plan. This type of waste disposal includes used and outdated chemicals and is discussed and covered under the hazard communications standard, as it does not involve infectious waste disposal.

Question: 8

Unsaturated chemical vapor, used in some sterilizers, consists of what components?

- A. Isopropyl alcohol and ethylene glycol.
- B. Sodium sulfate and denatured water.
- C. Water and isopropyl alcohol.
- D. Formaldehyde and alcohol.

Answer: D

Explanation:

Formaldehyde and alcohol. These components make up the unsaturated chemical vapors used in this type of sterilization. Unsaturated chemical vapors are used in place of water to sterilize instruments and the instruments then dry quickly following processing.

Question: 9

What is the basic concept that Universal or Standard Precautions is based on?

- A. Standard precautions only apply to those individuals who have a history of infectious disease
- B. Standard precautions only apply to those individuals who have a history of high-risk behavior such as drug abuse or sexual orientation
- C. Standard precautions apply to all patients and all bodily fluids should be treated as if infectious
- D. Standard precautions only apply to blood and saliva based on the patient's history

Answer: C

Explanation:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) developed Standard Precautions to help prevent the spread of disease. Standard Precautions and Universal Precautions are used interchangeably. The basic concept for Universal or Standard Precautions is that all blood and bodily fluids should be treated as infectious. It is not possible to determine which patients may have an infectious illness even with the patient's history available for review. Some patients do not tell the truth and some patients might not know about a condition. Universal or Standard Precautions should apply to all patients. Bodily fluids that may spread disease include blood, secretions, saliva, skin, mucous membranes, and products of excretion. Standard Precautions consist of hand washing, the use of personal protective equipment, treatment of patient care equipment and environmental surfaces, and prevention of injury.

Question: 10

Which of the following is a semi-critical instrument?

- A. Scalpel.
- B. Bone chisel.
- C. Extraction forceps.
- D. Dental handpiece.

Answer: D

Explanation:

A dental handpiece is an example of a semi-critical level instrument. The description of this category of instruments is that they come into contact with the mucosa in the oral cavity, but they do not penetrate bone. The bur that is placed in the dental handpiece would be considered a critical level instrument, but the handpiece itself is an example of a semi-critical level instrument.

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