

Principles of Aseptic Technique in the Operating Room

- 1. All materials that enter the sterile field **must be sterile****
2. Sterilization is the only means by which an item can be considered sterile. If it comes in contact with an unsterile item, it becomes contaminated.
3. Contaminated items should be removed immediately from the sterile field.
4. Sterile team members must wear only sterile gowns. Once dressed for the procedure, they should recognize that ***all parts of the gown are considered unsterile except the front from the chest to table level and the sleeves to 2 inches above the elbow.***
5. A wide margin of safety must be maintained between the sterile and unsterile field.
6. Team members motions should be **from sterile to sterile** or **from unsterile to unsterile.**
7. **Tables are considered sterile only at tabletop level** and items extending beneath this level are considered contaminated.
8. The edges of a sterile package are considered contaminated once the package has been opened.
9. Bacteria travel on airborne particles and will enter the sterile field with excessive air movements and currents.
10. Bacteria travel with moisture and liquids by capillary action from surface to surface
11. Bacteria harbor on the team members' and the patient's hair, skin, and respiratory tract.