

## **Biosecurity in Action**

### **Beating the bugs**

The care and maintenance of surgical instruments and equipment is integral to the prevention of nosocomial (health-care associated) infections. Ensuring proper sterilization protocols and procedures are in place to minimize morbidity and mortality associated with surgical site infections is a critical part of managing a busy practice. Biosecurity practices associated with infection control in the surgical patient include appropriate use of perioperative antimicrobials and disinfectants, effective surgical preparation, proper “house-keeping” (regular and thorough cleaning of the surgical areas) and the handling and storage of sterile goods. The sterile processing of instruments and equipment is fundamental to biosecurity efforts in the surgical suite.

Heidi Reuss-Lamsky, a veterinary technician working in a Bloomfield Hills, Michigan referral service submitted an excellent article in the November 2011 edition of *Veterinary Technician* (Heidi Reuss-Lamsky, “Beating the “Bugs”: Sterilization is Instrumental”, *Veterinary Technician* Vol 32/No 11 (November 21, 2011): E1-E9). The article provides an extensive overview of instrument decontamination and cleaning; sterilization methods; packaging and sterile processing; and sterilization process monitoring.

Information provided in this article should be mandatory reading for clinic staff engaged in the process of reviewing biosecurity practices as they relate to the care of surgical equipment.

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