

## Chapter RL 72

### SAFE PRACTICE

RL 72.01	Sanitation.
RL 72.02	Sterilization.
RL 72.03	Treatment procedures.
RL 72.04	Disposal of needles.

RL 72.05	Procedure for exposure to blood.
RL 72.06	Precautionary procedures.
RL 72.07	Safe practices.

**RL 72.01 Sanitation.** All areas of an establishment and the equipment used by acupuncturists in the establishment shall be maintained in a clean, sanitary and safe condition.

**History:** Cr. Register, October, 1990, No. 418, eff. 11-1-90.

**RL 72.02 Sterilization. (1)** All nondisposable needles, acupuncture equipment that comes in contact with a patient's blood or body fluids or penetrates the skin, and equipment used to handle or store needles shall be sterilized after each use.

**(2)** All equipment required to be sterilized by this section shall be thoroughly wiped clean with a disinfectant or cleansing solution before sterilization.

**(3)** Sterilization, as required by this section, shall be accomplished by use of one of the following in accordance with manufacturer's instructions:

(a) Autoclave for 30 minutes at 250° F., 15 pounds of steam pressure. If this method is employed, the packaging used to store the needles shall have autoclave tape to verify sterilization.

(b) Dry heat sterilization for 2 hours at 338° F. If this method is employed, the acupuncturist shall check needles for breakage after sterilization.

(c) Ethylene oxide.

**(4)** The following procedures are not acceptable methods of sterilization:

(a) Boiling.

(b) Soaking in alcohol or other antiseptic solution.

(c) Glass bead sterilizer.

**(5)** Equipment used to sterilize shall be maintained in good working order. Sterilization equipment shall be monitored as required by the manufacturer to ensure that it is functioning in accordance with manufacturer's specifications.

**(6)** Any equipment that has been sterilized shall be stored in packaging that protects against contamination and that is clearly marked to distinguish it from unsterile equipment. Sealed packages containing sterilized equipment shall be marked with an expiration date in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

**(7)** Resterilization of equipment is required if any of the following occur:

(a) It is equipment stored in a sealed package beyond its expiration date.

(b) Its packaging is damaged in any way which adversely affects the ability of the packaging to maintain the sterility of its contents.

(c) It is not used on the day the equipment is removed from its package.

**(8)** No needle, cup, or other device shall be used on more than one point of any patient, or applied to a single point on any patient more than one time, before it is resterilized.

**History:** Cr. Register, October, 1990, No. 418, eff. 11-1-90; **am. (1), Register, May, 1998, No. 509, eff. 6-1-98.**

**RL 72.03 Treatment procedures. (1)** Before any treatment commences, a patient shall be given the option, at the patient's own expense, to have treatment with disposable acu-

puncture needles, which have been sterilized and wrapped in accordance with s. 451.12, Stats., and maintained in accordance with s. RL 72.02 (7).

**(2)** An acupuncturist shall wash his or her hands by scrubbing thoroughly for at least 10 seconds with soap or anti-microbial products between treatment of patients, immediately before an acupuncture procedure and after contact with blood or body fluids or obvious environmental contaminants.

**(3)** A clean field shall be maintained to protect sterility of equipment used in acupuncture treatment of each patient.

**(4)** A topical disinfectant shall be applied to the skin surface in the area prior to needle insertion or treatment that breaks the skin.

**(5)** A sterile needle shall be maintained in a sterile state prior to insertion into an acupuncture point and its shaft shall not come in contact with fingers during insertion, positioning or other manipulation.

**History:** Cr. Register, October, 1990, No. 418, eff. 11-1-90; **am. (1), Register, May, 1998, No. 509, eff. 6-1-98.**

**RL 72.04 Disposal of needles.** All needles shall be placed in a rigid, puncture-proof sealed container for disposal. Containers used for disposal shall be so labeled, and shall carry the warning "CONTAMINATED CONTENTS—USE PRECAUTIONS." Disposal containers are to be handled and discarded appropriately.

**History:** Cr. Register, October, 1990, No. 418, eff. 11-1-90.

**RL 72.05 Procedure for exposure to blood.** When a patient or acupuncturist is exposed to blood by bleeding needles, laceration, or other exposure to broken skin or mucous membrane, the acupuncturist shall stop, thoroughly wash the exposed area or wound on the patient's or acupuncturist's body with soap and water, and disinfect the exposed area or wound with a topical disinfectant. In the case of mucous membrane exposure, the acupuncturist shall wash or rinse the affected area with copious amounts of water.

**History:** Cr. Register, October, 1990, No. 418, eff. 11-1-90.

**RL 72.06 Precautionary procedures. (1)** An acupuncturist shall cover any abrasions, oozing or open lesions or wounds on his or her hands or forearms prior to patient contact. If an acupuncturist has oozing or open lesions or weeping dermatitis on his or her hands or forearms that cannot be effectively covered, the acupuncturist shall refrain from direct patient contact until such condition has resolved.

**(2)** An acupuncturist shall use a new pair of disposable protective gloves in treating each patient who has oozing or open lesions or weeping dermatitis in the area where treatment is to be performed and dispose of the gloves after each such use.

**(3)** If an acupuncturist learns that a patient has AIDS, hepatitis, or any other blood-borne infectious disease, or has tested positive for HIV, then the acupuncturist shall use disposable needles in treating that patient.

**History:** Cr. Register, October, 1990, No. 418, eff. 11-1-90; **am. (3), Register, May, 1998, No. 509, eff. 6-1-98.**

**RL 72.07 Safe practices.** (1) No acupuncturist shall engage in any treatment which violates standards of good and accepted practice of acupuncture, or which makes use of any unsanitary or non-sterile equipment.

(2) An acupuncturist shall obtain from each patient a medical history pertinent to the patient's chief complaints.

(3) When an acupuncturist encounters a patient with a potentially serious disorder including, but not limited to, cardiac conditions, uncontrolled hypertension, acute abdominal symptoms, acute undiagnosed neurological changes, unexplained weight loss or gain in excess of 15% of body weight within a 3 month period, suspected fracture or dislocation, suspected systemic infection, communicable disease, any serious undiagnosed hemorrhagic disorder or acute respiratory distress without previous

history or diagnosis, the acupuncturist shall:

(a) In a non-emergency situation, request a consultation or written diagnosis from a licensed physician prior to commencing acupuncture treatment or continuing treatment if the situation is discovered in the course of treatment.

(b) In an emergency situation, provide life support and transportation to the nearest licensed medical facility.

(4) An acupuncturist shall have on file for each patient treated a written confirmation signed by the patient and the acupuncturist acknowledging that the patient has been advised to consult a physician regarding the conditions for which such patient seeks acupuncture treatment.

**History:** Cr. Register, October, 1990, No. 418, eff. 11-1-90; **renum. (2) and (3) to be (3) and (4) and am. (3) (a), cr. (2), Register, May, 1998, No. 509, eff. 6-1-98.**