



Prestige Medical

choosing the correct autoclave for you

class

The autoclave must be fit for purpose. Choose one that is suitable for the loads you plan to process. 'Type N' is only suitable for unwrapped solid instruments, 'type B' is suitable for all load types. For more information see Fact Sheet One

case size

Establish where you intend to keep your autoclave. If you have a space restriction determine if the autoclave has a smaller case that will fit confined spaces. If space is severely restricted, it may be worth considering the purchase of a suitable smaller autoclave that is specifically designed for sterilizing small instruments or handpieces.

chamber size

Choose an autoclave with the appropriate chamber diameter for your needs - the bigger the chamber the greater the capacity for instruments, especially when wrapped. Although a smaller chamber may have faster overall cycle times, which could be more appropriate.

cycle time

A non vacuum cycle 'type N' is usually faster than a vacuum 'type B', and a faster cycle gives a faster turnaround of instruments. Don't be tempted to sacrifice sterilization for speed; a vacuum cycle is essential if you are processing hollow, wrapped or pouched instruments. Ensure the autoclave has the appropriate choice of cycles to meet your sterilizing requirements

heater design

One that heats the water outside the chamber, ensures that the load will be completely dry and minimises the amount of treated water lost between cycles, which costs you money.

single use water

Autoclaves that use fresh water for each cycle offer superior performance as there are no contaminants from previous cycles being used in the sterilizing process.

aesthetic design

An autoclave should look good, be easily maintained and easy to operate. A modern autoclave will complement modern practices and will present a good image to patients, reassuring them that they're in safe, caring hands.

printer facility

Printers make permanent recording easy but do cost extra. If you do not invest in a printer initially, ensure that you can refit one at a later date - without incurring expensive fitting costs.

datalogging facility

Some manufacturers now offer Datalogging facilities that can be connected to the autoclave and record every cycle onto an electronic memory card. Cycle details can then be easily downloaded to a computer for reading and archiving. This avoids the need for untidy paper storage and costly consumables.

servicing

Ask if the manufacturer has specialist service engineers or offer training courses. The last thing you want is for your autoclave to be serviced/repaired by someone who doesn't know what they are doing.

guarantees/warranties

Check with the manufacturer what guarantees they offer. Some models come with extended guarantees on heater elements and chambers. Check the period of warranty offered with the autoclave. Those with two-year warranties offer increased peace-of-mind and will save you money.

quality assurances

Quality standards are there for a reason. Check if the sterilizer conforms to the Medical Devices Directive (93/42/ EEC), is CE marked accordingly and conforms to the latest European sterilizer standard EN13060, and HTM2010 in the UK. The manufacturer should also be ISO 9001/EN460001 accredited.

infection control fact sheet 2