**Home Office Minimum Standards for Aseptic Surgery**

1. **Instruments**
   a. Instruments must be sterile (autoclaved) before starting aseptic surgery
   b. Use a fresh set for each animal
   c. If a fresh set is not available for batch surgery then a method of sterilising instruments between each animal must be in place

2. **Consumables**
   a. All consumables (e.g. swabs, needles, suture materials) must be sterile and used within their stated expiry dates.

3. **Animal preparation**
   a. Clip and prep the animal for surgery in an area which is separate from the operating room/area
   b. Clip and disinfect the incision site adequately using organic iodine or chlorhexidine solutions. Avoid alcohol as a disinfectant
   c. Always cover the animal and bench with sterile drapes, leaving the surgical area exposed

4. **Surgeon preparation**
   a. Use a clean gown (preferably sterile) or cover-all
   b. Consider the use of protective, clean head coverings
   c. Wash your hands and use sterile gloves – ensuring that they remain sterile as you put them on

5. **During Surgery**
   a. Do not touch anything that is not sterile with sterile surgical gloves
   b. Only put down instruments in the sterile field
   c. If you need to touch a non-sterile surface, e.g. anaesthetic machine, either change gloves immediately afterwards or use a sterile swab and immediately discard it
### Minimum Standards for Aseptic Surgery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>![Checkmark]</th>
<th>![X]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Plan**             | - Have all your surgical equipment ready in advance  
                      - Consult the NVS or NACWO before starting any surgery |
|                      | - Do not arrive unprepared and expect everything to be available and ready |
| **Instruments**      | - Use sterilised surgical instruments and consumables for each animal |
|                      | - Alcohol/chlorhexidine does NOT sterilise the instruments  
                      - Do not put sterile instruments down onto the bench |
| **Animal Preparation** | - Prepare the skin of the animal adequately  
                        - Use sterile drapes |
|                      | - Alcohol is ineffective for skin preparation  
                      - Don’t contaminate the sterile field with non-sterile items |
| **Surgeon**          | - Wear a clean, preferably sterile, gown or coverall  
                        - Wash your hands  
                        - Wear sterile gloves and change them if they become contaminated or punctured |
|                      | - DO NOT touch non-sterile surfaces after gloving up. This includes the fur of the animal, anaesthetic machine, consumables and your phone!  
                      - Do not allow the suture material to drag over a non-sterile surface |