DRAPING

AIMS

- To create and maintain a sterile field.
- To expose the operative site and isolate the area.
- To define an area of safety and restrict sterile items to that area.

KEY POINTS

1. Ensure the sterile drapes to be placed on the patient, furniture and equipment are included in the sterile field.
2. Sterile draping is only performed by scrubbed personnel.
3. Drapes shall be unfolded to enable ease of application.
4. Minimise the movement and handling of the sterile drapes.
5. Carry the drapes folded to the operative site holding them high enough to avoid contamination.
6. Drape using an aseptic technique to provide a sterile area surrounding the operative site.
7. Once drapes are positioned they shall be secured to prevent movement.
8. Ensure in cases where towel clips are used to secure the drapes that they do not pierce the patients skin.
9. Allow adequate time to complete the procedure safely.
10. Folded edges should face the incision to prevent loss of instruments.
11. During draping, gloves are protected with a cuff of linen to reduce the risk of potential contamination.
12. When draping the opposite side, walk around. Do not stretch across an unsterile surface.
13. If there is doubt about the sterility of a drape it shall be discarded.
14. Only scrubbed personnel shall touch the sterile draped surfaces.
15. Draped tables shall be moved by placing hands in the horizontal surfaces only.
16. Avoid altering the level of the sterile field.

17. Unscrubbed personnel shall

   i. Not lean over the sterile field.
   ii. Maintain an appropriate distance from the sterile field at all times (approximately 30cm)
   iii. Not move between two sterile fields if a safe distance (approximately 30cm) cannot be maintained. Unscrubbed personnel must ask the scrub nurse to move her trolley if they must pass.
   iv. Move sterile draped equipment by holding the vertical uprights below the level of the drape.