

Statement on Isopropyl Alcohol Shortage and use in AERs

March 17, 2020

Dear Valued Medivators Customer:

This letter is in response to inquiries regarding shortages of 70% isopropyl alcohol, which is referenced in the Medivators Automated Endoscope Reprocessor (AER) User Manuals as an optional step of the reprocessing cycle.

The purpose of the Alcohol Purge Phase is to help purge any residual fluids from the endoscope by improving water evaporation and therefore drying of endoscope channels. Although recommended, this portion of the reprocessing cycle is not required to meet high-level disinfection.

Medivators is aware of an increasing shortage of isopropyl alcohol (isopropanol) likely in response to the global outbreak of COVID-19 cases.

Medivators is aware that certain facilities are addressing this shortage by obtaining a higher concentration of isopropyl alcohol and diluting it down to 70% isopropyl alcohol, using sterile or distilled water. Medivators has not performed any testing on the effects of diluted alcohol on the efficacy of endoscope reprocessing.

Medivators recommends that you work with your internal infection control personnel to address and implement any changes to your endoscope reprocessing systems.

If your internal infection control personnel choose to continue endoscope reprocessing without the Alcohol Purge Phase due to the shortage of 70% isopropyl alcohol, please contact Medivators Technical Support at 1-800-444-4729 (option 2) to make the required system updates to inactivate the optional Alcohol Purge Phase from your AER.

If you choose to continue to reprocess endoscopes without the Alcohol Purge Phase, the endoscope may retain more moisture than it would with the alcohol purge. Additional drying steps may need to be taken to further dry the endoscope prior to storage. Wiping the exterior of the scope with a low linting cloth, as well as purging the inner lumens of the endoscope with low pressure instrument air to remove excess moisture may be necessary if a validated drying cabinet is not part of the processing cycle.¹

If you have any additional questions, please contact Medivators Technical Service at 1-800-444-4729 (option 2).

¹ Society of Gastroenterology Nurses and Associates, Inc. (SGNA). (2016). Standards of Infection Prevention in Reprocessing Flexible Gastrointestinal Endoscopes.