Podiatry Instrument Care & Cleaning The care and cleaning of your nail clippers and instruments may change depending on the material that they are made from.Always protect the cutting edges of your clippers and if they have a lock plate at the back use it when they are not in use. Wash or rinse instruments in warm not hot water as soon as possible after proceedures to stop blood or debris from drying on them and making the instruments harder to clean. If scrubbing instruments to clean them do not use a wire brush or harsh scourer as this can damage the resistance of the instrument to corrosiion. Instruments made from different materials should not be processed ntogether (stainless steel,copper,chrome plating,carbon steel). Ultrasonic cleaning is recomended as the most effective method of cleaning surgical instruments. Always run full cleaning cycles so that all residues of detergents and cleaning solutions etc are rinsed from all box joints and hinges. When autoclaving make sure instruments are in an open position so that metal expansion caused by heat does not cause cracking or damage to instruments.

If carrying nail clippers with other instruments try to stop them from coming into contact causing damage to cutting edges and posibly affecting the corrosion resistance. When using chemicals always read and stick to the manufacturers recomended dosages

* Place instruments in open position into the cleaning solution
* Make sure that instruments with sharp blades (scissors, etc.) do not touch other instruments. All instruments must be fully submerged.
* Instruments should not be processed in the cleaner for more then 3 hours
* After cleaning, rinse instruments with water to remove cleaning solution.
* Be sure to lubricate instruments after rinsing and sterilization cycle.
* Use stiff plastic cleaning brushes. Do not use steel wool or wire brushes.
* Brush delicate instruments carefully and, if possible, handle them separately from general instruments.
* Make sure all instrument surfaces are visibly clean and free from stains.
* Inspect each instrument for proper function and condition. Make sure that instruments blades glide smoothly all the way (blades must not be loose when in closed position). Make sure that all cuticle and nail nippers are aligned and do not show light between the jaws, that they lock and unlock easily, and that the joints are not too loose. Examine cutting instruments and knives to be sure their blades are sharp and undamaged.
* After scrubbing, rinse instruments thoroughly under running water. While rinsing, open and close nail nippers – cuticle nippers and other hinged instruments to ensure that hinge areas are also rinsed out.
* Lubricate all instruments, which have any metal-to-metal action such as nippers, etc. Surgical instrument lubricants should be used. Do not use industrial lubricants.
* Instruments may be autoclaved individually or in sets.
* Individual instruments—Disposable paper or plastic pouches are ideal. Make sure you use a wide enough pouch (4″ or wider) for instruments with ratchet locks (such as needle holders and hemostats) so the instrument can be sterilized in an open (unlocked) position.
* Instrument Sets—Unlock all instruments and sterilize them in an open position. Place heavy instruments on bottom of set (when two layers are required).
* Never lock an instrument during autoclaving. This will prevent the steam from reaching and sterilizing the metal-to-metal surfaces. Furthermore, heat expansion during autoclaving can cause cracks in hinge areas.