



# Instrument Inspection: Test Your Knowledge



BY RICK SCHULTZ

**T**he previous “Instrument Whisperer” article stressed the importance of surgical instrument inspection. Now, it is time to test your inspection-related knowledge. Answer the 25 true-or-false questions below and enter for a chance to win a set of the author’s Instrument Coaching Cards™. To submit your answers, see the instructions and QR code at the end of this article.



## Please answer true (T) or false (F) for each statement:

- Do not allow blood to dry on the instruments. T/F
- Soak instruments in saline post-procedure. T/F
- Separate the rings of a hemostat and inspect the box lock (hinge area) for blood, tissue and cracks on both sides. T/F
- It is not necessary for the jaws of a hemostat to align properly. T/F
- When testing a hemostat or needle holder, the ratchets should lock in each position. T/F
- Figure 1 shows an acceptable practice for storing forceps. T/F
- Always separate the rings of a scissor and inspect the screw/hinge area on both sides for blood, tissue and cracks. T/F
- Blood rarely becomes trapped in the screw of a scissor. T/F
- When opening and closing a scissor, the cutting action should be smooth. T/F
- Scissor sharpness testing programs are essential. T/F
- Red scissor test material should be used for scissors shorter than 4½ inches. T/F
- Yellow scissor test material should be used for scissors 4½ inches and shorter. T/F
- The scissor in Figure 2 shows pitting; this instrument should be removed from service immediately. T/F
- Separate the rings of a needle holder and inspect the jaw and box lock for blood, tissue and cracks on both sides. T/F
- When inspecting the jaw of a needle holder for treadwear, Figure 3 shows an instrument that should be removed from service. T/F



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

- 16. Inspect the teeth on tissue forceps to ensure they are present and properly interfit. T/F
- 17. Inspect the handles of tissue forceps for blood and cracks on one side. T/F
- 18. Tissue forceps have serrations and dressing forceps have teeth. T/F
- 19. A few burrs on a retractor are acceptable as long as they are very small. T/F
- 20. The Senn retractor shown in Figure 4 is non-repairable and should be removed from service immediately. T/F \*Bonus point: Explain your answer.

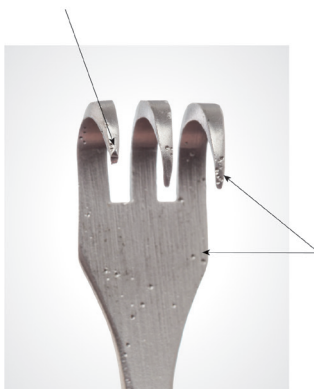


Figure 4


- 21. Self-retaining retractor levers should always have a spring action. T/F
- 22. Placing heavy instruments on top of the suction tube in an instrument tray will dent the suction tube. T/F
- 23. Poole and Yankauer suction tubes should be completely disassembled for effective cleaning. T/F

- 24. The laparoscopic spoon forcep shown in Figure 5 should be removed from service and sent for repair. T/F \*Bonus point: Explain your answer.



Figure 5

- 25. The blade grooves of scalpel handles do not need to be inspected. T/F

Scan this QR code to easily submit your answers online. Deadline to submit is June 10, 2023. All participants' names will be entered into a drawing for a set of Instrument Coaching Cards™. Good luck! 



**RICK SCHULTZ**, the Instrument Whisperer™, is an author, inventor, lecturer, and the retired Chief Executive Officer of Spectrum Surgical Instruments Corp. He served as contributing editor of HSPA's *Central Service Technical Manual* (fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth editions). Schultz authored the textbooks *Inspecting Surgical Instruments: An Illustrated Guide* and *The World of Surgical Instruments: The Definitive Inspection Textbook*, which was released in June 2018. In October 2021, Schultz published the veterinary medicine textbook *The World of Surgical Instruments for Animal Health*. Schultz was named HSPA's Educator of the Year in 2002 and the American Hospital Association Educator of the Year in 2006. In 2007, he was named by *Healthcare Purchasing News* as one of the 30 Most Influential People in Healthcare Sterile Processing. Schultz currently provides educational lectures to Sterile Processing professionals at HSPA's annual conferences and conducts Operating Room personnel lectures across the country.

**Disclaimer:** The views and opinions expressed in this column are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of HSPA. The content provided in this column is also not a reflection or representation of any other company or organization with which the author may be affiliated.