6 The killing or fixation of micro organisms

Again, for most of the subjects, I will use the definitions given by the committee on nosocomial infections of the Health Council in 1990 (Bol90).

Antisepsis: disinfection of the skin and mucous membranes

Asepsis: procedure with the purpose of preventing the contamination of material and tissue.

Chemical disinfection: disinfection (decontamination) with the help of disinfectants.

Conservation: the application of substances that check microbial growth in situations where the growth of micro organisms can lead to the formation of a reservoir from which an contamination can take place.

Disinfect (decontaminate): a chemical or physical process focussing on the reduction of the number of micro organisms and on the elimination of the risk of infection. Not all of the micro organisms necessarily get killed; spores also stay much intact. The term is used for lifeless objects and materials as well as for skin and mucous membranes.

Domestic cleaning: mechanical removal of dirt and micro organisms with cleansing materials such as brushes and detergents.

Pasteurisation: thermal disinfection at about 70^0C. The purpose is to kill off every pathogenic micro organism (not the total elimination of all spores).

Sterile: a product is considered sterile when the chance of the occurrence of living micro organisms in or on the product is smaller than 1: 10^6. In common language: free from micro organisms.

Sterilization: process focussing on the killing or elimination of all organisms (also microbial spores).

Thermal disinfection: disinfection (decontamination) by the impact of hot water or steam at temperatures up to and including 100˚C. Pasteurisation and scalding are included in this terminology.