## Aseptic versus Clean Technique

Aseptic technique, a method used to prevent contamination with microorganisms, is recommended by the evidence-based guidelines for all instances of insertion and care of central venous catheters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Aseptic Technique</th>
<th>Clean Technique</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Utilization of Barriers** | Requires the use of various barriers to prevent the transfer of microorganisms from health care personnel and the environment to the patient during a procedure, such as the following:  
  - Sterile gloves  
  - Sterile gowns  
  - Sterile drapes  
  - Masks | Involves reducing the numbers of microorganisms to minimize the risk of transmission from the environment or health care personnel, using the following:  
  - Appropriate hand hygiene  
  - Clean gloves |
| **Patient and Equipment Preparation** | Involves procedures for patient and equipment preparation, such as the following:  
  - Antiseptic skin preparation of the patient at the time of the procedure  
  - Sterile instruments  
  - Sterile equipment  
  - Sterile devices | Efforts are made to prevent direct contamination of supplies and materials. |
| **Environmental Controls** | Includes environmental controls, such as the following:  
  - Keeping doors closed during operative procedures  
  - Minimizing traffic into and out of operating rooms  
  - Excluding unnecessary personnel during procedures | Patient’s environment undergoes routine cleaning. |
| **Contact Guidelines** | Only sterile-to-sterile contact is allowed; sterile-to-nonsterile contact must be avoided. | Sterile-to-sterile rule does not apply. |

**Note:** Anytime a central venous catheter is inserted when adherence to aseptic technique cannot be ensured, as might occur during a medical emergency, it is essential that the catheter be replaced as soon as possible, preferably within 48 hours (Infusion Nurses Society. Infusion Nursing Standards of Practice. *J Inf Nurs*. 2011 Jan–Feb;34 Suppl 1:S1–110. O'Grady NP, et al.; Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee [HICPAC]. Guidelines for the prevention of intravascular catheter-related infections. *Clin Infect Dis*. 2011 May;52[9]:e162–193. Epub 2011 Apr 1).