



WORLD  
PRECISION  
INSTRUMENTS

## Metal Microelectrodes

## CARE & INSTRUCTION MANUAL

### Warranty

WPI (World Precision Instruments) warrants to the original purchaser that this equipment, including its components and parts, shall be free from defects in material and workmanship for a period of 30 days from the date of receipt. WPI's obligation under this warranty shall be limited to repair or replacement, at WPI's option, of the equipment or defective components or parts upon receipt thereof f.o.b. WPI, Sarasota, Florida U.S.A. Return of a repaired instrument shall be f.o.b. Sarasota.

The above warranty is contingent upon normal usage and does not cover products which have been modified without WPI's approval or which have been subjected to unusual physical or electrical stress or on which the original identification marks have been removed or altered. The above warranty will not apply if adjustment, repair or parts replacement is required because of accident, neglect, misuse, failure of electric power, air conditioning, humidity control, or causes other than normal and ordinary usage.

To the extent that any of its equipment is furnished by a manufacturer other than WPI, the foregoing warranty shall be applicable only to the extent of the warranty furnished by such other manufacturer. This warranty will not apply to appearance terms, such as knobs, handles, dials or the like.

WPI makes no warranty of any kind, express or implied or statutory, including without limitation any warranties of merchantability and/or fitness for a particular purpose. WPI shall not be liable for any damages, whether direct, indirect, special or consequential arising from a failure of this product to operate in the manner desired by the user. WPI shall not be liable for any damage to data or property that may be caused directly or indirectly by use of this product.

### Claims and Returns

• Inspect all shipments upon receipt. Missing cartons or obvious damage to cartons should be noted on the delivery receipt before signing. Concealed loss or damage should be reported at once to the carrier and an inspection requested. All claims for shortage or damage must be made within 10 days after receipt of shipment. Claims for lost shipments must be made within 30 days of invoice or other notification of shipment.

Please save damaged or pilfered cartons until claim settles. In some instances, photographic documentation may be required. Some items are time sensitive; WPI assumes no extended warranty or any liability for use beyond the date specified on the container.

• WPI cannot be held responsible for items damaged in shipment en route to us. Please enclose merchandise in its original shipping container to avoid damage from handling. We recommend that you insure merchandise when shipping. The customer is responsible for paying shipping expenses including adequate insurance on all items returned.

• Do not return any goods to WPI without obtaining prior approval and instructions (RMA#) from our returns department. Goods returned unauthorized or by collect freight may be refused. The RMA# must be clearly displayed on the outside of the box, or the package will not be accepted. Please contact the RMA department for a request form.

• Goods returned for repair must be reasonably clean and free of hazardous materials.

• A handling fee is charged for goods returned for exchange or credit. This fee may add up to 25% of the sale price depending on the condition of the item. Goods ordered in error are also subject to the handling fee.

• Equipment which was built as a special order cannot be returned.

• Always refer to the RMA# when contacting WPI to obtain a status of your returned item.

• For any other issues regarding a claim or return, please contact the RMA department

**Warning: This equipment is not designed or intended for use on humans.**

### WORLD PRECISION INSTRUMENTS

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## Metal Electrodes

Serial No. \_\_\_\_\_

www.wpiinc.com

032720



### UNPACKING A MICROELECTRODE

The electrodes are nested in foam slits for safe shipment and storage. To remove, grasp the electrode near the connector end, part the foam slit with your other hand, and gently lift the electrode out of the slit while being careful to not allow the tip to touch any surface. Inspect the electrode and, if damage is suspected, examine the tip under a light microscope with at least X100 power. Please note that the insulation is resilient enough that if the tip was bent, the electrode could still read the correct impedance value.

### STERILIZING A MICROELECTRODE

While microelectrodes intended for acute and non-critical applications can be cleaned and disinfected using a 70% alcohol rinse for 2 to 3 minutes, this is not recommended as a primary sterilization method for critical applications or chronic implantation. Our microelectrodes are compatible with a few common primary sterilization methods, including autoclave and gas (EtO), if they are not exposed to a temperature greater than 150° C. Care must be taken to protect the electrode tips during sterilization.

One common solution is to construct a container for use in gas sterilization by drilling holes into or otherwise propping open a plastic holding box, inside of which the electrodes are mounted using clips or tape.

### CONNECTING TO THE MICROELECTRODE

The miniature male pin connector integrated with the end of the electrode mates with the female connector which is provided with each box ordered. If the male connector must be removed to connect to the experimenter's micro-drive system, the Parylene-C insulation may be removed by either scraping it off with a scalpel blade or melting it using a small flame. Some investigators have found that wedging the back end of the electrode, after removing about 1 inch of insulation, into a hypodermic needle works quite well. The hypodermic needle conveniently plugs into a standard banana jack. WPI offers different connector options to hold the metal microelectrode and can connect on to most systems.

### CLEANING AND RE-USING

After removing the electrode from tissue, the electrode should be thoroughly cleaned by sonication in a 50% sodium hypochlorite (bleach) solution for 2 to 3 minutes. The electrode should then be sonicated in distilled water for 2 minutes followed by 1 minute in 70% alcohol. If a sonic cleaner is not available, increase the soaking time for each step to 5-10 minutes. Once cleaned, the electrode

can be reused or re-sterilized as normal. It is recommended that the electrode impedance be tested before reuse to verify proper function. If you have trouble reproducing the measured impedance values as noted on the box (which may be the case after sterilization or prolonged storage), WPI recommends an electrolytic cleaning of the surface using the following protocol:

1. Prepare a bath of saline or PBS and affix the microelectrode into the bath alongside an appropriate ground electrode.
2. Connect the microelectrode to the negative pole of a potentiostat, stimulator, battery or some other device capable of delivering precise DC voltage. The ground should be connected to the positive pole.

**CAUTION:** It is critical that the electrode be properly attached to the negative polarity and not positive, as positive current can drive the electrode metal to dissolve and further increase in impedance.

3. Apply 2-3 VDC across the electrode while it is immersed in a saline bath for a period of between 5-10 seconds. It is not recommended that voltage be applied continuously for longer than 10 seconds, as bubbling and heat can damage the microelectrode.

**CAUTION:** High impedance microelectrodes with impedance greater than 2.5 MΩ should not be continuously cleaned for longer than 5 seconds.

Electrode impedance can be measured using a potentiostat or a low-current AC 1kHz impedance meter such as the Omega-Tip-Z meter (with WPI adapter #5468). If an AC impedance tester that is accurate in this range is not available, use a sine wave generator with a large series resistance (1 MΩ) and blocking capacitor (0.1 μF) to generate a constant current sine wave. If you start with 10 V p-p at 1 kHz, the signal across the electrode will be 10 mV/kΩ.

If damage is suspected along the electrode shaft, test by slowly lowering the electrode into the saline bath and observing any abrupt drop in impedance value. It is normal to observe a steady lowering of impedance as the electrode is immersed more deeply, due to the shunt capacitance associated with the electrode's thin insulation. However, an abrupt decrease can be indicative of damaged insulation.

**CAUTION:** In applications where higher impedance microelectrodes, typically above 2 MΩ, will be immersed more than 4 or 5 mm into a conductive medium, additional insulation should be considered to minimize shunting. Polyimide tubing, which is used in our PT electrode models, is recommended.

