

Sterilization is the complete elimination of all microorganisms, making an object sterile. Disinfection, however, only destroys vegetative and non-sporing microorganisms, reducing the number of contaminants to a safe level. Disinfectants are chemicals used for disinfection on inanimate objects, while antiseptics are milder versions used on living tissues like skin and mucous membranes. Sterilization methods are categorized as physical or chemical. Physical methods include heat, filtration, and radiation.