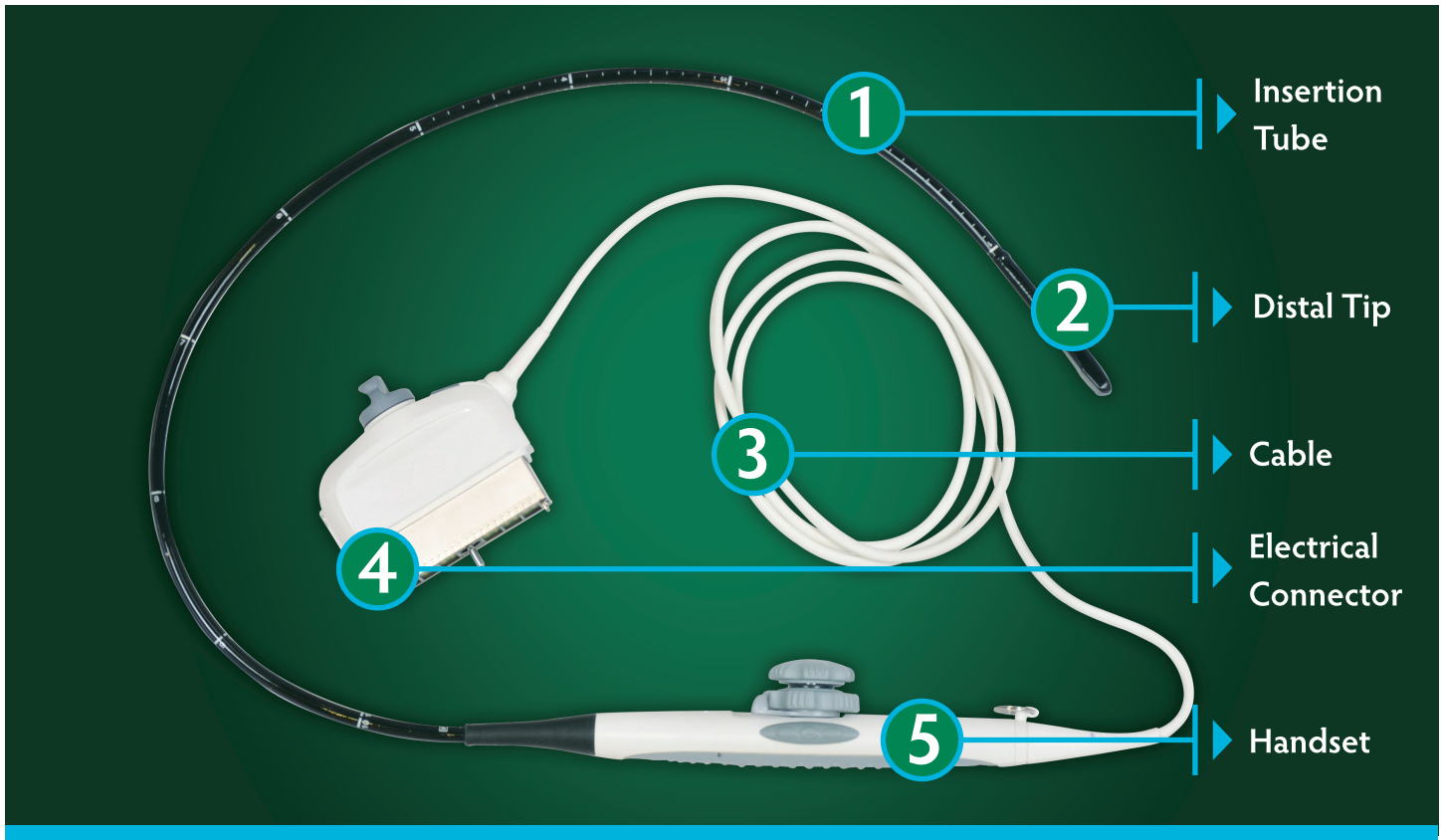


What is a TEE Ultrasound Probe?

And why it matters.



Knowing the TEE Ultrasound Probe

TEE ultrasound probes consist of five main parts, as described by probe manufacturers and as illustrated above.

- The electrical connector (4) connects the ultrasound machine to the probe.
- The cable (3) of the probe connects the handset (5) to the electrical connector. This steering mechanism and handle are not water tight and should not be submersed in liquid.
- The long insertion tube (1) with transducer at the distal tip (2) can be difficult to handle during pre-cleaning, cleaning, high-level disinfection, drying and subsequent storage and transportation.

Why it matters

The overall length of the TEE ultrasound probe and the fragile nature of the transducer make handling of the device susceptible to damage and challenging for healthcare professional. Care to minimize excessive handling and contact shock to the distal tip should be taken when manipulating the components during all facets of reprocessing. To properly reprocess a TEE ultrasound probe the technician should be aware of the delicate nature of various components.

The critical difference between a colonoscope or a gastroscope and a TEE probe is it can't be completely submerged into the rise and high-level disinfectant baths. The TEE probe is not watertight and complete submersion of the probe could cause serious damage and result in the inoperability of the TEE probe.

A thorough understanding of the TEE ultrasound probe and how it should be reprocessed is critical. This knowledge will lead to minimized TEE ultrasound probe damage, improved patient outcome and allow for proper reprocessing that minimize Healthcare-Associated Infections (HAIs).