

# Pre-Operative Showering Instructions for Vascular Surgery

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You play an important role in your health before surgery. Because skin is not sterile, it is made as clean as possible by these 2 steps:

- Step 1. Pre-operative showering – done by the patient.
- Step 2. Antiseptic cleansing – done by the staff.

## What are my pre-op showering instructions?

### Get the special soap needed for showering.

- You will need antibacterial soap containing the antiseptic chlorhexidine gluconate (CHG). It is sometimes called BactoShield® or Hibiclens®.
- The clinic may give you a small bottle of soap (or CHG soap scrub brush). If not, buy antibacterial soap at your local drug store (ask the pharmacist for help).
- **If you have a known allergy to CHG:**
  - Do not use this soap.
  - Inform your surgeon or nurse; and
  - Use Dial or Safeguard soap.

### Showering

- Shower with antibacterial soap the night before **and** the morning of your surgery. There is enough soap in the 4 oz. bottle to shower two times.
- **Do not** shave the area of your body where your surgery will be performed.
- Wash your hair as usual with your normal shampoo during each shower or bath. Do not use the special soap to wash your hair.
- Apply the CHG soap **only from the neck down**. Avoid getting soap in your eyes, ears and mouth.

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- Use **gentle** friction with a washcloth or soft sponge to aid in dirt removal. However, rough scrub brushes and harsh scrubbing **should be avoided**.
- Pay special attention to your neck, under arms, breasts, feet, groin, and skin fold regions.
- If your surgery **is on your back side**, use a long-handled brush to reach, or have someone wash your back.
- Rinse well after washing with soap.
- Gently towel dry your skin.
- Do not apply anything to your clean skin - no lotion or creams, and no powder.
- Wear clean clothes the day of your surgery.

Disclaimer: This document is for informational purposes only and is not intended to take the place of the care and attention of your personal physician or other professional medical services. Talk with your doctor if you have Questions about individual health concerns or specific treatment options.

CVC control # 275

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Last Revised March 2011