

# Preventing Infections from your Surgery



Follow the steps below to prevent infections from your surgery and increase your chances for a good recovery, and overall health. Ask your care team about specific instructions related to your surgery.

## Before surgery:



**Do not shave or use hair removal products** around the surgical site for at least 3 days before surgery. These can irritate the skin and could lead to infection.



**Keep nails clean**, trimmed and free of polish or artificial nail products. These may carry germs and increase infection risk. This applies to the patient and anyone caring for the patient.



**Quit smoking and vaping and avoid second hand smoke.** People who smoke or who are exposed to smoke get more infections. Talk to your care team about how you can quit before your surgery and what tools are available to help quit smoking. It is recommended to stop smoking 4-6 weeks before surgery.

## Day before surgery:



In the evening, **shower or bathe with a liquid or new bar of antibacterial soap** such as Dial, Hibiclens, or the soap provided to you at your clinic visit. Pay special attention to skin folds, arm pits, groin, and belly button.



**Wash your hair** with any shampoo and dry off with a clean towel.



**Do not apply** any deodorant, lotions, creams, powders, makeup or perfume to your skin.



**Dress in clean clothes** and sleep with **clean linens and clean comfort items (such as blankets, stuffed toys, pacifiers, etc.)** on the bed. Clean means laundered and dried and not used until the night before or day of surgery.

## Day of surgery:



Shower or bathe with a **liquid or new bar of antibacterial soap** such as Dial, Hibiclens, or the soap provided to you at your clinic visit. Pay special attention to skin folds, arm pits, groin, and belly button.



**Do not apply** any deodorant, lotions, creams, powders, makeup or perfume to your skin.



Dress in **freshly laundered, loose fitting clothes**. Make sure all comfort items being brought to the hospital are clean such as blankets, toys, and other comfort items.



**Brush your teeth** and rinse your mouth. This reduces your chances of pneumonia after surgery.

## After surgery:



Keep your **incision clean and dry**. Always **wash hands** before and after changing dressings or touching the incision. Scrub fingers, forearms, and under nails with soap for at least 20 seconds.



**Do not take a bath or submerge** your incision in water (such as in a pool or hot tub) until cleared by your care team. **Ask your team about when it is safe to start showering and what type of soap to use.**



**Wear clean clothes, sleep on clean linen, and keep pets away** from your incision.

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