

# Daily CHG Treatment

## Education for Patients and Families

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During your hospital stay, you will have an antimicrobial cleanser applied to your skin if you are in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU), select high risk units, or in general care with a central line. This cleanser is called chlorohexidine gluconate, or CHG. CHG kills germs on skin for up to 24 hours after it is applied. This CHG cleanser comes in the form of prepackaged wipes and will be applied once a day to help keep you from developing a bloodstream infection.



### **What is a Central Line?**

A central line is a tube that is placed into a large vein in your neck, chest, arm or groin. This tube is used to give fluids or medications more effectively to the body than a regular IV. If this central line is not cared for, a bloodstream infection can occur when bacteria or other germs travel down the tube and enter the blood.

### **How can I keep myself healthy with daily CHG treatment?**

Keeping skin clean and free of germs is one of the best ways to prevent infections while in the hospital. Your nurse or nurse-aide will assist you with CHG treatment. Applying CHG daily while in the hospital has been shown to help prevent bloodstream infections. CHG can also protect you from getting an antibiotic-resistant bacteria such as methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*.

### **How are the CHG wipes applied to my skin?**

CHG wipes cleanse your skin in addition to killing germs. You may opt to take a bath or shower prior to the CHG treatment. CHG wipes should be used on the outside of your body from the neck down. Use regular soap and shampoo on the face and head. The correct number of wipes for most people is six, your

nurse or nurse aide will use each wipe on a different part of the body. Fewer wipes may be used in children depending on their weight.

### **What should I expect when using CHG wipes?**

- CHG wipes are warmed for your comfort before use, but CHG may feel cool on your skin as it dries. This feeling should go away once your skin is dry.
- Your skin may feel sticky after use of the CHG wipes. This sticky feeling is due to the moisturizer in the wipes to prevent skin dryness. This feeling should go away once the skin is dry. The CHG left on the skin will continue to kill germs over time so it is important not to rinse off after being wiped with the CHG wipes.
- If you have concerns about itchiness or irritation to CHG wipes, tell your nurse. They may give you a hospital-approved lotion to help ease your symptoms. This lotion will not interfere with the CHG treatment.

### **What can happen if I do not apply CHG wipes daily?**

Germs try to find every route into the body to cause an infection, including your central line. A bloodstream infection can occur when bacteria or other germs on your skin travel down the central line tube and enter the blood. A severe bloodstream infection can increase your length of stay in the hospital by up to an additional 24 days and increase your chances of death by 35%. Simple things like applying CHG wipes daily can help prevent this type of infection.

Together, we can prevent infections and speed your rate of healing by maintaining a clean body and a clean central line.

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