

Showering Instructions Before Surgery

Before surgery, you can play an important role in your own health. Because skin is not sterile, we need to be sure that your skin is as clean as possible. Your skin will be prepared with antiseptic before your surgery, but the antiseptic can work better if your skin is **clean**.

To clean your skin before surgery, your surgeon has asked that you shower with an antibacterial soap like Dial[®], Lever[®], or Safeguard[®] (body wash or a new bar of soap). Or your surgeon may have given you, or asked you to buy, an antiseptic soap with chlorhexidine gluconate (CHG)* in it. If you are allergic to any of these products, you should not use them and tell your surgeon or nurse. Studies have shown it is not as important **what** antiseptic soap product you use, but that it is very important that you do shower or bathe before your surgery.

***For CHG soap:** You may be given a scrub brush containing CHG soap, or be given a small bottle of soap in the clinic. You **do not** need a prescription to get the soap. The brand name for this soap is Hibiclens[®] or BactoShield[®].

General Instructions

- For best results, shower **both** the evening before and day of your surgery.
- **Do not** shave the area of your body where the surgery will be done.
- With each shower or bath, wash your hair with your normal shampoo. Do not wash your hair with the CHG soap.
- Apply the CHG soap **only from the neck down**; other antiseptic soaps you may use as usual.

- Use **gentle** friction with a washcloth or soft sponge to remove dirt, **avoid rough scrub brushes and harsh scrubbing**.
- Pay special attention to your neck, under arms, breasts, feet, groin and skin fold regions.
- Leave soap on skin for 1-2 minutes to allow the soap to kill the bacteria. Rinse well after washing.
- If your surgery is on **your back side** - have a family member wash your back, or use a long-handled brush.
- Avoid getting any soap in your eyes, ears and mouth.
- Do not use lotion, cream, powder, deodorant, or perfume after washing.
- Wear clean clothes the day of your surgery.

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