

Patient Instructions

Preparing Your Skin for Surgery with Hibiclens

Before surgery, you can play an important role in your health. Because skin is not sterile, you can reduce the number of germs on your skin by carefully washing before surgery. Please follow these instructions.

1. You will need to shower with a special soap called chlorhexidine gluconate (CHG). A common brand name for this soap is Hibiclens, but any brand is acceptable. The soap comes in a liquid form and can be purchased at most pharmacies, or from the hospital's gift shop. You will only need a small bottle, about 8 ounces.
2. Wash your hair as usual with your normal shampoo.
3. Rinse your hair and body thoroughly afterward to remove the residue.
4. Turn the water off before applying the CHG soap to prevent rinsing it off too soon.
5. Then apply the CGH soap to your entire body **ONLY FROM THE NECK DOWN**. Do not use CHG near your eyes or ears to avoid injury to these areas. Wash thoroughly for five minutes, paying special attention to the area where your surgery will be performed. Do not scrub your skin too hard. Do not wash with your regular soap after using CHG is used.
6. Turn the water back on and rinse your body well.
7. Pat yourself dry with a clean, soft towel after each shower. Then put on clean clothes or pajamas and sleep on freshly laundered bed linens. Do not apply any lotions, perfumes or powers after using CHG the day of surgery.

Note: if you are allergic to Chlorhexidine, use antibacterial soap (such as Dial) for your shower.