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Showering Before Surgery

Your surgeon has requested that you take two antiseptic showers before your surgery

Why is this important?

It is normal for bacteria (germs) to be present on your skin. The skin protects us from those germs. When you have surgery, we will be cutting your skin. Sometimes germs can get into those cuts and cause an infection. This special soap will reduce the number of bacteria on the surface of your skin-this is a common practice and one that has been shown to be safe and effective in reducing the risk of developing an infection. The steps listed below must be followed completely for the process to be effective.

Special Soap:

Buy or get 8 ounces of antiseptic surgical soap called 4% Chlorhexidine Gluconate (4% CHG). Common name brands of this soap are **Hibiclens** or **Exidine**.

*****Shaving:** Do not shave within 12 inches of your incision area for at least 3 days prior to surgery. Shaving can cause small cuts in the skin that can put you at higher risk of a surgical site infection.

Items you will need for each shower:

- 2 Newly washed washcloths
- 2 Newly washed towels
- 1/2 of the antiseptic soap

THE FIRST SHOWER

The evening before surgery:

1. Wash your hair using your normal shampoo. Make sure you rinse the shampoo from your hair and body. Towel off your hair and body with the first towel so your skin is dry for the next step.
2. Apply the antiseptic soap to a clean damp washcloth, and then apply it gently to your skin from the neck to your toes. Apply to your groin area last. **Do not use** this soap on your face or head. If you get any soap in your eyes, ears, or mouth, rinse immediately. Place the first washcloth aside.
3. Repeat this process a second time with the second washcloth, again keeping it out of your eyes, ears and mouth. Apply to your groin area last.



4. Let the antiseptic soap remain on the surface of your skin for at least 1 minute, then rinse thoroughly. Dry yourself with the second towel.
5. If you feel any uncomfortable tingling, itching, or other irritation, rinse immediately. It is normal to feel some coolness on the skin after applying the antiseptic soap. Your skin may feel a bit dry after the shower, but do not apply any lotions, creams or moisturizers since this may reduce the effectiveness of the antiseptic soap. Do not use hair spray or other products in your hair. (*Over to other side for more instructions*)
6. Dress in freshly washed clothes or pajamas.
7. Fresh clean sheets and pillowcases should be used after this shower.

THE FINAL SHOWER

The Day of Surgery:

1. Apply the antiseptic soap to a clean damp washcloth, and then apply it gently to your skin from the neck to your toes. Apply to your groin area last. **Do not use** this soap on your face or head. If you get any soap in your eyes, ears, or mouth, rinse immediately. Place the first washcloth aside.
2. Repeat this process a second time with the second washcloth, again keeping it out of your eyes, ears and mouth. Apply to your groin area last.
3. Let the antiseptic soap remain on the surface of your skin for at least 1 minute, then rinse thoroughly. Dry yourself with the second towel.
4. If you feel any uncomfortable tingling, itching, or other irritation, rinse immediately. It is normal to feel some coolness on the skin after applying the antiseptic soap. Your skin may feel a bit dry after the shower, but do not apply any lotions, creams or moisturizers since this may reduce the effectiveness of the antiseptic soap. Do not use hair spray or other products in your hair.
5. Dress in clean clothing