

Pre-procedural skin preparation instructions

To reduce your risk of infection at the surgery site, it is very important to clean your skin at home with a special germ-killing cleanser before surgery. Follow the instructions below to safely clean your skin with 4% chlorhexidine gluconate (also known as CHG).

Where to find CHG

You do not need a prescription to buy CHG antimicrobial solution. You can purchase it at your local pharmacy. Ask the pharmacist for assistance. Some brand names for CHG include Hibiclens, Hibistat, Exidine and Hex-A-Cleans.

You will need two to four ounces of the solution for each shower.

How to use CHG at home

- Use CHG in the shower. Do not use it in a bathtub.
- Use CHG the evening before your surgery and the morning of your surgery, for a total of two showers at home.
- **If you are having spinal or joint replacement surgery,** use CHG two evenings before your surgery and on the morning of your surgery, for a total of three showers at home.

How to clean the skin with CHG solution

1. For your first evening shower, wash yourself with your regular soap and shampoo.
2. Before applying the CHG solution, ensure that you have completely rinsed the soap and shampoo from your hair and body.
3. With the shower water turned off, apply the CHG solution to your body with your hands. Avoid your face, hair and genitals.

4. Clean the surgery site for about three minutes. If you cannot reach the surgery site, have someone help you. Be sure they clean their hands before assisting.
5. Once you have finished applying the CHG to your skin and three minutes have passed, turn the water back on and rinse the CHG solution off of your body.
6. Completely dry the skin with a fresh, clean, dry towel.
7. Do not use lotions, powders, perfumes or deodorants.
8. Dress in fresh, clean pajamas or clothing.
9. **If you are having spinal or joint replacement surgery,** repeat the process outlined above for your second evening shower.
10. For the shower taken on the morning of your surgery, follow the instructions above **but do not use regular soap or shampoo** – only use the CHG solution.

CHG and hair removal

- CHG may irritate recently shaven skin. Do not shave or use hair removal products for 24 hours prior to surgery.
- If you choose to shave before the 24-hour window, do so prior to applying the CHG solution to avoid skin irritation and hair clippings sticking to your skin.
- If hair removal is necessary for your procedure, it will be done by the surgical team in the operating room.

CHG cautions

- If redness or skin irritation occurs after using CHG, stop using the solution and contact your surgeon.
- Do not apply CHG to your face, hair or genitals.
- Only use the CHG solution in the shower. Do not use it in a bathtub. If it is not possible for you to shower, contact your surgeon's office for further instructions.

If you have questions or concerns prior to your procedure, speak with your surgeon.