

# Chlorhexidine Skin Cleaning before Surgery

When you clean your skin before surgery, you help reduce the chances of getting an infection.

## Prepare

- Buy **two (2)** 4% Chlorhexidine Gluconate sponges or liquid solution from a pharmacy.

 **Test your skin** to make sure you are not allergic to the Chlorhexidine. Wipe a small area of skin with a sponge or some liquid wash. Choose an area of skin that is away from where the surgery is being done (your surgery site).

If you get a rash, **stop using** the Chlorhexidine. Rinse off right away. Show the nurse the rash when you come in for surgery. Follow these instructions using regular soap.

## Take 2 showers

The **night before your surgery**, take a shower, following the steps to clean your skin described here.

- Before your shower, remove all jewellery including wedding bands and piercings (Don't put them back on until after the surgery).
- After your shower, **do not** put any products on your skin (such as deodorant, lotion, make-up, cologne, or perfume). If having surgery on your head, **do not** use any hair conditioner or hair products.

The **morning of your surgery**, take another shower, repeating the same steps as the night shower.



## Steps for cleaning your skin

1. Take these instructions with you into the bathroom so you can refer to them.
2. Wash your hair, scalp, and face (including beard) using your own shampoo and soap either the night before or the morning of surgery.  
\*If having surgery on your head, wash your hair, scalp, and face **again** in the morning. **Do not** use hair conditioner, hair products, or skin creams.
3. Rinse your whole body with water.
4. Step away from the shower spray or move the shower head aside.
5. Wash down your body from neck to feet with one (1) Chlorhexidine sponge **-or-** some Chlorhexidine liquid solution.  
**See the picture, Page 2**  
**Note:** Use a new sponge for each shower.
6. After your shower, dress in clean sleepwear. Sleep in clean sheets. Dress in clean clothing to come to the hospital.



## Caution

**Do not** use Chlorhexidine on your face, hair, or any broken skin or open wounds.

If you get a rash using Chlorhexidine, **stop** using it, rinse right away. If you are concerned about your reaction, see a doctor.

**External use only. Do not** use the Chlorhexidine inside your private parts.

**Washing with Chlorhexidine**

1. a) Wet **one (1)** Chlorhexidine sponge and squeeze until you get suds.

**Use the sponge side only.** Do not use the plastic brush on your skin.

**-or-**

b) Put some liquid on a clean wet wash cloth and rub until you get suds.

2. Gently rub the Chlorhexidine back and forth over each body area for 30 seconds each in the following order:

Upper body	right arm	30 seconds
	left arm	30 seconds
	front	30 seconds
	Back*	30 seconds

Legs	right	30 seconds
	left	30 seconds

Groin and anal area**	front and back	30 seconds
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\* You might need someone to help wash your back.

\*\* Do not use inside your private parts.

Make sure you clean:

- in your belly button
- under your finger nails
- between your toes

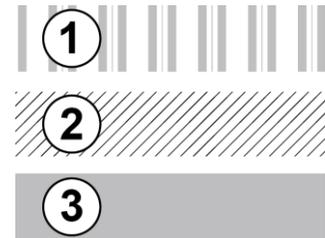
3. Leave Chlorhexidine suds on your skin for at least **two (2) minutes**.

4. Rinse off completely from your neck down to your feet.

5. Use a clean towel to dry off. Start drying yourself from your head down to your toes. Dry your groin and anal area last.

**Remember** – Do not put any products on your skin after your showers (such as deodorant, lotion, make-up, cologne, or perfume). If having surgery on your head, do not use any hair conditioner, hair products, or skin creams.

**Wash in this order**



**Do not use Chlorhexidine on head, face, or hair**

