

Preventing Infection: *Cleaning your body with antiseptic soap for 5 days before surgery*

What is antiseptic soap?

Antiseptic soap is a special germ-killing wash that is used to clean the skin before surgery.

Why use antiseptic soap?

Many different germs live on your skin. A powerful antiseptic called CHG (chlorhexidine [klor-HEX-eh-dine] gluconate [GLUE-kon-ate]) can kill 99 % of those germs. Using a soap that contains CHG can help prevent those germs from getting into an open wound or your bloodstream and causing infection.

Do not use an antiseptic soap if you:

- Have an allergy to CHG
- Have severe skin breakdown, rash, burns, or open wounds

Remember:

- **Do NOT use CHG soap near your eyes, ears, nose, or genitals (private parts).**
- **Do NOT** shave or remove body hair from below the neck the night before or day of surgery.
- **Do NOT** wash with regular soap directly after using CHG soap.

How and when to wash your body before surgery

You will need to shower **5 times** using the antiseptic soap:

- The 4 nights before your surgery
- The morning of your surgery, before coming to the hospital

Supplies you will need:

- 5 antiseptic soap packets ▶
- Clean bath towels
- Clean clothes and bed sheets



1 Take your normal shower, making sure to wash your hair and face with your regular soap and shampoo. Be sure to rinse well.

2 Open 1 of the antiseptic soap packets. Wet the sponge and turn off the water. As you start to wash, pay special attention to the area where you will have surgery (your hip or knee). Wash in a circle or back-and-forth motion for at least 5 minutes. Then, begin washing away from the hip, across the belly and chest to the base of the neck. Continue washing your back, both arms, legs, and feet. **Do NOT use CHG soap near your eyes, ears, nose, or genitals (private parts).**



3 After washing, rinse well and use a clean towel to pat the skin dry. **Do not put on any lotions, creams, perfumes, or deodorants.**

4 To keep your body clean after washing, put on clean pajamas. Make sure your bed sheets are clean on the first night and again on the night before your surgery. After your last shower on the morning of your surgery, put on clean clothes. At the hospital you will be given a gown to put on before surgery.

▶ *If you have any questions, please ask one of your healthcare providers for help.*

For use before elective hip and knee replacement surgery. Please contact your care team with any questions or concerns you may have about these instructions.

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