



Preoperative CHG Shower Instructions

WHY ARE PREOPERATIVE CHG SHOWERS IMPORTANT PRIOR TO SURGERY?

Your skin naturally carries bacteria that are usually harmless. However, during surgery, these bacteria can enter the body and cause infections known as surgical site infections (SSIs).

Using chlorhexidine gluconate (CHG), commonly called Hibiclens®, helps reduce the number of bacteria on your skin. Lower bacteria levels mean a lower chance of developing an infection after surgery. **Completing these preoperative showers before surgery is an important step toward reducing your risk of a surgical site infection.**

WHAT IS CHLORHEXIDINE GLUCONATE (CHG)?

Chlorhexidine gluconate (CHG) is an antiseptic skin cleanser that is more effective than regular soap at killing germs. It continues working on your skin for up to 24 hours after use.

When using CHG:

- Your skin may feel slightly sticky—this is expected
- Mild dryness or redness can occur
- Let the solution remain on your skin for at least 2 minutes before rinsing to ensure effectiveness

If you have a known allergy to CHG or any of the ingredients in Hibiclens®, use antibacterial soap (such as Dial®) instead.

WHERE TO PURCHASE OR OBTAIN CHG?

CHG or Hibiclens® is available for purchase at local pharmacies and retail stores such as Walgreens, CVS, Target, and Walmart. You may also obtain Hibiclens® from the following locations at no cost:

- **Blaine** - Blaine Orthopedic Surgery Center (3rd floor)
- **Chaska** – Two Twelve Surgery Center (3rd floor, Suite 340)
- **Eagan** – Eagan Orthopedic Surgery Center (3rd floor)
- **Edina** - Crosstown Surgery Center (3rd floor)
- **Plymouth** – Plymouth Orthopedic Surgery Center (3rd floor)

If you are unable to obtain CHG or Hibiclens®, please contact your surgeon's clinic coordinator for assistance with accessing these products or identifying alternative resources.



WHEN TO PERFORM YOUR CHG SHOWERS?

You will complete **two** CHG showers total: **one the night before surgery and one the morning of surgery.**

Important tips:

- Use your regular shampoo and soap before applying CHG
- Rinse thoroughly prior to CHG application
- Do not use any other soaps or products after applying CHG

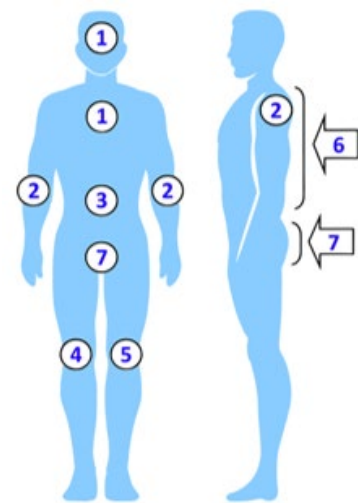
STEPS FOR SHOWERING WITH CHG

Avoid contact with your eyes and ears. If contact occurs, rinse thoroughly with cool water.

Refer to body diagram showing cleaning order: face and neck, arms, torso, legs, back, then groin last.

Steps:

1. Shower as usual with regular soap and shampoo, then rinse completely. Do not shave.
2. Wash your face gently with a small amount of CHG, avoiding eyes and ears, then rinse.
3. Turn off the water before applying CHG to your body.
4. Using a clean washcloth or sponge, apply a generous amount of CHG.
5. Clean your body from top to bottom, ending with groin and buttocks.
6. Pay special attention to the surgical site, skin folds, armpits, and joints.
7. Gently scrub and reapply as needed.
8. Let CHG remain on your skin for at least 2 minutes.
9. Turn water back on and rinse thoroughly.



AHRQ Pub. No. 25-0029/April 2025

AFTER YOUR SHOWER

- Dry off using a clean towel
- Put on clean clothing
- Do not apply lotion, deodorant, perfume, or powder
- Use fresh bed sheets and pillowcases
- Ensure all areas are completely dry