

Skin and Hair Prep Before Surgery

Using CHG soap

This handout explains how to clean your skin and hair with CHG soap before having surgery at Harborview Medical Center.

What is CHG soap?

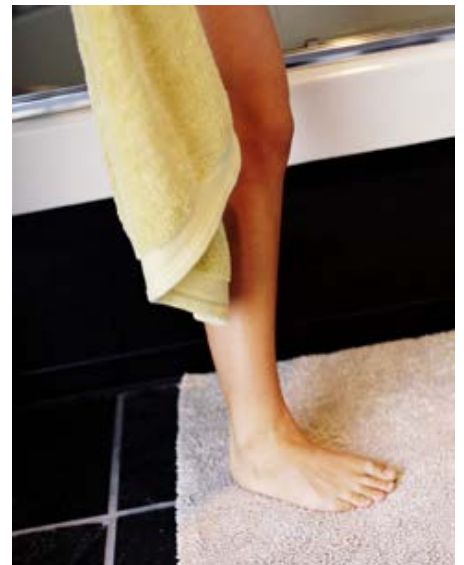
Before your surgery, you will use a special soap to clean your skin and hair. The soap contains an *antiseptic* called *chlorhexidine gluconate* (CHG). Cleaning your skin and hair with CHG soap before surgery helps prevent infection.

If you are allergic to chlorhexidine, use your regular soap to shower with. If you have pain or itching after using the soap:

- Stop using the soap.
- Rinse the area well.
- Tell staff about your pain or itching on the morning of your surgery.

Night Before Surgery

- Shower as usual with your regular soap and water. Then wash off the soap completely. **Do not shave.**
- Turn off the water.
- To wash your hair:
 - Apply CHG soap (**diluted with an equal amount of water**) to your scalp.
 - Leave the soap on your scalp while you wash your skin with CHG soap.
- To wash your skin:
 - Use a washcloth to apply CHG soap (**full strength**) to your body from the neck down.
 - Do **not** use CHG soap on your face, genitals, or areas where you have open sores.



Use a clean towel to dry off after your shower with CHG soap.

- If you can, let the CHG soap stay on your skin for at least **1 minute**.
- Rinse your scalp and skin well.
- Use a clean towel to dry off.
- Do not apply any other soaps, lotions, moisturizers, or makeup after you have used the CHG soap.
- Put on clean nightwear and use clean sheets on your bed after you shower.

Morning of Surgery

- Take another shower. Follow the same steps as you did for your shower the night before.
- Put on clean clothes after you shower.

Questions?

Your questions are important.
Please call your clinic with
any questions or concerns.