Preparing your skin before Spine Surgery

2 Showers. 2 Days. Fewer germs.

Surgical Site Infections and Pre-Operative Skin Preparation for Spine Surgery: What You Can Do
Questions: Please call (315) 744-1475 and ask to speak Trisha or (315) 423-4941 and ask for Cathy

Before surgery, your body needs to be thoroughly cleansed with a special soap. This is because all humans have bacteria and germs that live on their skin. These bacteria normally help us by digesting dead skin cells and other materials on our bodies, clothing, and furniture. When you have surgery, these bacteria can sometimes cause an infection. You will receive a special soap from pre-admission testing called Chlorhexidine Gluconate (CHG) solution 4%. This soap must be used for two showers prior to your surgery; the night before surgery and the morning of surgery.

**Caution:** Do not use Chlorhexidine Gluconate solution 4% on your head or face. Avoid contact with your eyes. (If contact occurs, flush eyes thoroughly with water). Do not use if you are allergic to Chlorhexidine Gluconate or any inactive ingredients in this soap. Avoid use in the genital area, as irritation may result. Use your regular soap in this area.

**Do not shave the surgical area!** Your nurse will use clippers to remove hair, if needed, at the surgical site on the day of surgery. Using a razor to remove your hair before surgery can cause infections because it can leave small cuts on the skin.
Preparing your skin before Spine Surgery

You will shower with the soap provided two times prior to your surgery.

**Shower #1 (or sponge bath if necessary) the evening before surgery**

1. Wash your hair using normal shampoo. Make sure you rinse the shampoo from your hair and body. Wash your face with your regular soap/cleanser.
2. Using a fresh, clean washcloth and one packet of the Chlorhexidine Gluconate solution 4% soap; wash from your neck down. *This is very important.*
3. Rinse your body thoroughly. *This is very important.*
4. Using a fresh, clean towel, dry your body.
5. Dress in freshly washed clothes.
6. Fresh clean sheets and pillowcases should be used after *this* shower.
7. *Do not* use lotions, powders, or creams after this shower.

**Shower # 2 the morning of surgery**

- REPEAT steps 1-5 and
  - Dress warmly. Keeping warm before surgery decreases your risk of developing an infection.
  - *Do not* use lotions, powders, creams, hair products, makeup, or deodorant after this shower.

The nursing staff at Saint Joseph’s Hospital Health Center (SJHHC) wishes you a speedy recovery. We thank you for choosing SJHHC for your surgical needs. If you have questions after reading this information, *please call (315) 744-1475 or (315)423-4941 (evenings and weekends, call (315) 448-5410 and ask to speak with a nurse).*
You will complete this checklist **ONLY if you were tested for staph and you need treatment**

**DECOLONIZATION PATIENT CHECKLIST**
for Spine Surgery using Bactroban/Mupirocin Ointment

- Use ointment for five days, twice a day
- Read medication label to make sure the you have the correct ointment

1. Wash your hands
2. Using a cotton tipped applicator (Q-tip), apply approximately a pea sized amount of the ointment directly on the cotton applicator (Q-tip)
3. Tilt head back slightly
4. Insert the cotton tipped applicator (Q-tip), into one nostril and then repeat for the other nostril using a new cotton tipped applicator.
5. Avoid contact of the ointment with your eyes
6. Press the sides of your nose together and gently massage to spread the ointment throughout the inside of the nostrils

- You may experience a slight irritation when used as directed. Discontinue the use of the ointment and contact your doctor if you have a SEVERE reaction.

*Please complete and bring this form with you the morning of surgery and give it to your nurse.*

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