



QUESTIONS QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ANSWERS

How to Clean Your Skin before Surgery

We need to be sure your skin is as germ-free as it can be before your surgery. You can reduce the number of germs on your skin by washing carefully. Follow the steps below.

1. Shower with a special liquid soap called chlorhexidine gluconate (klor-hex i-dine glu-co-nate). Call it CHG for short.
 - A common name for this soap is Hibiclens (Hi-bi-clens), but any brand is ok.
 - All large drug stores or discount stores like Wal-Mart should have it.
 - Do not use this soap if you know you are allergic to it. Ask the druggist to help you find another germ-fighting soap.
2. **Do not use this soap to wash your:**
 - face
 - hair
 - genitals (private parts)
3. Do not shave 24 hours before surgery. Shaving can increase your risk of infection during surgery. You may shave after surgery.
4. After you shower **do not use:**
 - lotions
 - powders
 - creams
 - Vaseline

The Shower the Night before Surgery

1. Wash your hair as usual with your regular shampoo.
2. Rinse your hair and body completely after you shampoo. Be sure no shampoo is left anywhere on you.
3. Wash your face with your regular soap or face cleaner.
4. Use a fresh wash cloth to **gently** rub CHG soap on your body.
Wash only from the neck down.
 - Do not use CHG soap on the genitals (private parts).
 - Keep the soap away from your ears and eyes. It can cause lasting damage.
 - Wash completely. Pay special attention to the part of your body where the surgery will be done.
5. After putting on the CHG turn off the water so you do not rinse the soap off too soon.
6. Wash your body gently for 3 minutes. Do not wash with your regular soap after washing with CHG.
7. Turn the water back on. Rinse your body completely.
8. Pat yourself dry with a clean, soft towel.
9. Sleep in pajamas and sheets that have just been washed.

The Shower in the Morning before Surgery.

- Repeat the steps of the first shower on the morning of your surgery. Dress in clothes that have just been washed.
- Before your surgery you will get CHG cleaning cloths. You will learn how to clean yourself before surgery.

Our doctors serve with a deep respect for all. Their goal is to give the best care and education whether or not a person can pay.

St. Vincent Charity Hospital

2351 E. 22nd Street

Cleveland, Ohio 44115

216-861-6200

TTY: Ohio Relay 1-800-750-0750

St. Luke's Health Center

11201 Shaker Boulevard

Cleveland, Ohio 44104

216-721-6900

Reading Health, a program of Project:LEARN, assisted in the writing of this material
under a grant from the Sisters of Charity Foundation



**ST. VINCENT CHARITY
MEDICAL CENTER**

A Ministry of the Sisters of Charity Health System