

Pre-Operative Showers for Spine Surgery and Neurosurgery Procedures

What are we asking you to do?

Take **5 SHOWERS** before surgery using a special soap, called chlorhexidine gluconate (also known as Hibiclens[®], CHG). If you are allergic to CHG, use an antibacterial soap like Dial.

Why are we asking you to take so many showers before surgery?

Taking showers with a special soap in the days before surgery will help clean your skin for surgery. These showers remove germs from your skin. Pre-op showers are an important part of your plan to prevent infection after surgery.

Where can I find CHG soap?

The pre-surgical care clinic may give you this soap. CHG soap can be found at most major pharmacies, such as Walgreens, Rite Aid, Fred Meyers, Target, and outpatient hospital pharmacies.

When should I take my showers?

Follow the instructions in the table below to know when to take your showers.

Timing	Showering Rules
4 days before surgery	Take your CHG shower anytime & put on clean clothes.
3 days before surgery	Take your CHG shower anytime & put on clean clothes.
2 days before surgery	Take your CHG shower anytime & put on clean clothes.
1 day before surgery	Put clean sheets on your bed. Do not let pets sleep in your bed. Take your CHG shower in EVENING & put on clean sleepwear. Do not sleep with pets.
Day of Surgery	CHG shower in MORNING & put on clean clothes.

Showering Tips

1. Before showering, remove all jewelry and piercings.
2. Rinse your body with warm water.
3. Shampoo your hair with your regular shampoo and rinse.
4. Wash your face and genital area with your regular soap. Rinse off with water.
5. Turn off the water or step out of the shower stream when you are ready to apply the CHG. Do not get CHG soap on your face, eyes, ears, or genitals. If you do, rinse it off right away.
6. Using a clean washcloth, gently scrub the CHG soap into your skin. Start with your neck and work your way down to your toes. Focus on the area where your surgery will be. Have someone help wash your back if you are unable to reach it. Leave the CHG soap on your skin for 2 minutes before rinsing off.
7. Rinse off the CHG with warm water.
8. Dry off using a clean towel.
9. After your evening shower on the night before surgery, do not put any products on your skin. No ointments (including medications/CBD), makeup, lotion, powder, deodorant, perfume, aftershave, or hair spray.
10. Put on clean clothes after each shower.