

24 hours before your surgery

- Tell your surgeon if you have symptoms of any infection, such as a cold or flu.
- Do not smoke. Stay away from people who are smoking.
- Do not shave the surgical area. Even small cuts or skin irritation increase the risk of infection.
- Use the surgical cleanser as directed in this brochure.
- Follow any other directions your health care provider gives you to get ready for your surgery.

Keep your hands clean

Keeping your hands clean is one of the most important ways to reduce the spread of germs and the risk of infection. You can wash your hands with soap and water, or use a hand sanitizer.

It is important for you and others to have clean hands:

- before and after touching your wound or body fluid
- before eating
- after using the bathroom
- after blowing your nose, sneezing, or coughing
- after touching animals

Ask any visitors or caregivers to clean their hands before they visit or care for you. It is one of the best ways to reduce your risk of infection after surgery.

Reducing Your Risk of Surgical Infection



This material has been reviewed and approved by patients, families and staff.



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The information in this document is intended solely for the person to whom it was given by the health care team

How to reduce your risk of surgical infections

Any surgery has a risk of infection. The risk may be related to the type of surgery. The risk of infection is also influenced by many factors, including:

- smoking
- poor diabetes control
- obesity
- poor dental hygiene

Talk to your health care provider about what you can do to help lower your risk of infection.

You can reduce your risk of an infection at your surgical site by showering with a special surgical cleanser before surgery.

Why use the surgical cleanser?

Bacteria can get into your body through surgical incisions and cause infection. We will recommend a special cleanser to use before your surgery. By cleaning your skin and the surgical site, you will reduce the number of bacteria living on your skin. This makes your risk of infection smaller.

How to shower before your surgery

Shower as directed by your nurse, doctor, or health care provider. You may be instructed to shower with the cleanser twice: first the night before, and then again on the day of your surgery.

1. Wash with regular soap first, and rinse your body. Wash your face and hair as you usually would.
2. Open the surgical cleanser and use it to wash your body. Start at your neck, and work down your body. **Do not** use the surgical cleanser on your face, ears or genital area.
3. Scrub for 1 to 2 minutes. Focus on the surgical area(s), underarms, and under any body folds.
4. Step away from the water and continue to scrub. Keep scrubbing for another 1 to 2 minutes. Leave the cleanser on your body.
5. Once this time is finished, rinse your body with water.
6. Gently pat your skin dry with a clean towel and dress normally.

Do not use lotions, deodorants, powders, or perfumes after your shower.

Be careful with the surgical cleanser

- Do not let the surgical cleanser touch your eyes, ears, mouth, or genital area. If you get cleanser in those areas, rinse with water right away.
- If your skin is itching or “burning” when you use the cleanser, stop using it. Rinse the areas right away. Please tell the nurse about the skin reaction when you come to the pre-operative area before your surgery. Continue your shower using your regular soap instead.
- Do not use the cleanser if you are allergic to it. Do not use the cleanser if you have a rash, wound, or open sores on your skin. Take a shower with your usual soap instead.