

Getting Your Skin Ready for Shoulder Surgery

This handout explains how to prepare your skin before shoulder surgery. This is to help lower your risk for infection.

Please review the step-by-step instructions below. It is important to give yourself enough time to follow the steps carefully.

Your clinic will supply you with 5% benzoyl peroxide gel and chlorhexidine gluconate soap (CHG) at your visit. You can also buy it at your local pharmacy. Call your clinic if you have questions.

Supplies Needed

- 5% benzoyl peroxide gel
- Regular hand soap
- CHG soap and a clean washcloth
- Clean towels, bedsheets, pillowcase and pajamas

Start 3 Days Before Surgery

Do not shave or wax near the area where you will have your surgery.

Start 2 Days Before Surgery (Morning and Evening)

Start the below process for the 5% benzoyl peroxide gel.

1. Wash your hands with regular soap and water.
2. Apply a half dollar-sized amount of 5% benzoyl peroxide gel to the front and back of the shoulder that you will have surgery on.
3. Wash your hands with soap and water.

Day Before Surgery (Morning)

1. Repeat steps 1 – 3 for applying the benzoyl peroxide.

Night Before Surgery (After 6:00 pm)

1. Shower or bathe like usual. Do not shave or wax near the areas where you will have your surgery.
2. Turn off or step out of the stream of water.
3. Wet the clean washcloth. Apply CHG soap to the washcloth and wash from neck to toe. Do not apply the soap directly to your face, head or genital area. Then, repeat.
4. Wait 60 seconds (sing happy birthday two times slowly) Minimal contact to the genital area during rinsing is fine.
5. Rinse your skin with warm water. Do not scrub.
6. Blot your skin dry with a clean towel.
7. Do not use lotions, creams, powder, perfume or makeup after the shower or bath. Do not use deodorant on surgical side.
8. After the night shower – Use clean pajamas and clean sheets.
9. Repeat steps 1 – 3 for applying the benzoyl peroxide.

The Morning of Surgery at Home

1. Wash with the CHG soap.
2. Repeat steps 1 – 3 for applying the benzoyl peroxide.
3. Avoid anything that could make you sweat before surgery. Your skin needs to be clean and ready for surgery. Do not apply deodorant to the surgical side.

Tips

- Do not use if you are allergic to benzoyl peroxide, chlorhexidine gluconate (CHG) or any other ingredient in these products.
- If you notice a rash, redness or itching after using the CHG soap or the benzoyl peroxide gel, rinse off. Do not use it again. When you arrive for surgery, tell your health care team about your reaction.
- Avoid getting the CHG or the benzoyl peroxide in your eyes, nose, and ears.

Checklist

2 Days Before Surgery

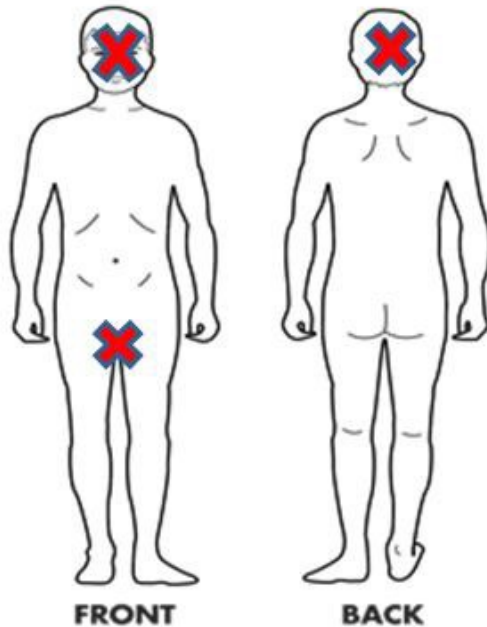
- ☐ Apply Benzoyl Peroxide in AM
- ☐ Apply Benzoyl Peroxide in PM

1 Day Before Surgery

- ☐ Apply Benzoyl Peroxide in AM
- ☐ Wash with CHG in PM
- ☐ Apply Benzoyl Peroxide in PM

Day of Surgery

- ☐ Wash with CHG in AM
- ☐ Apply Benzoyl Peroxide in AM



Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 3/2021 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing HF#8189.