

Daily Chlorhexidine Gluconate (CHG) Treatment

What is Chlorhexidine Gluconate (CHG) soap?

CHG soap (Hibiclens[®]) is used to reduce the number of germs on your skin. This soap kills germs on the skin for a longer period of time. It works when other body fluids, such as blood, are present.

Why is using CHG soap important?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that 1 out of every 20 patients will get an infection while they are in the hospital. These infections are called hospital acquired infections (HAIs). On any given day, about 1 in 31 hospital patients has at least one healthcare-related infection.

Studies show that your chance of getting a HAI is lower when the number of germs on your skin is lower. Reducing the chance of getting a HAI is important because HAIs lead to longer hospital stays and increased costs. **Using CHG helps decrease germs on skin which lowers your risk for infection.**

Can CHG soap cause skin problems?

Some of the side effects are:

- Itchiness
- Redness
- Irritation

These side effects often go away quickly. If you have any skin irritation, rinse the CHG soap (Hibiclens[®]) off your skin and let your nurse know right away.

Does CHG soap hurt metal jewelry or jewelry stones?

No. There is no data to show that CHG soap (Hibiclens[®]) hurts metal jewelry or jewelry stones.

How do I use CHG soap?

- If you have any open skin areas, check with a nurse before using CHG soap to shower.
- Wash your hair using regular shampoo. Then rinse your hair.
- Wash your face using the **Aloe Vesta[®] 3 in 1 Foam** or **Johnson and Johnson Bathing Wash.**
- Use **CHG** soap like you would use a liquid soap. Put the CHG soap directly on your skin and wash gently.
- Rinse well with warm water.
- **Do not** use your regular soap after you use the **CHG** soap.
- Dry your skin with a towel.

If severe redness and very dry skin occurs, stop daily CHG bathing and let your nurse know right away.

Can I use lotion after I use CHG soap?

Yes, you can use a lotion after you bathe with CHG soap. **Use** a lotion approved by the hospital that works well with CHG. Aloe Vesta, Cetaphil, or Aquaphor[®] lotion are good ones to use. Most over-the-counter lotions are **not** okay to use with CHG. **Only** use hospital approved lotions when you are in the hospital.

How can I help prevent the spread of germs on my skin?

- Talk with your nurse about what you need to do to prevent the spread of germs.
- Clean your hands before you leave your room and when you return.
- Bathe daily and change into clean clothing. If you cannot bathe yourself, staff will help you.
- Put on a clean robe (may use a second gown worn like a robe) before you leave your room. Keep the robe on while outside your room.
- Avoid contact with other patients.

What about when I go home?

Most of the time, CHG is not needed at home. However, sometimes patients do need to bathe daily at home with CHG soap. Your doctor or nurse will tell you if you need to use CHG at home.

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 © 4/2021 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#7403.