

# Preparing Your Skin Before Vascular Surgery

## Halifax Infirmary

If you have any questions about these instructions, call:

**Halifax Infirmary Day Surgery**

- › Phone: 902-473-3187
- › Hours: Monday to Friday,  
6 a.m. to 4 p.m.

# Preparing Your Skin Before Vascular Surgery: Halifax Infirmary

You will get a package of cloths before your surgery. The cloths are pre-moistened with 2% chlorhexidine gluconate (CHG). CHG cleans and prepares your skin for surgery.

**Do not open the package until you are ready to use the cloths.**

## **2 days before your surgery:**

- **Do not shave any part of your body**, including your legs or under your arms. Shaving before you apply 2% CHG may cause redness or make your skin itch.
- You can shave your face, if needed. An electric razor is best.
- You may shower or bathe as usual.

## **The night before your surgery:**

- Shower or bathe using soap and a clean towel.

**Do not use personal care products (like lotions, moisturizers, or makeup).** The water and ingredients in these can make the CHG less effective.

## The morning of your surgery:

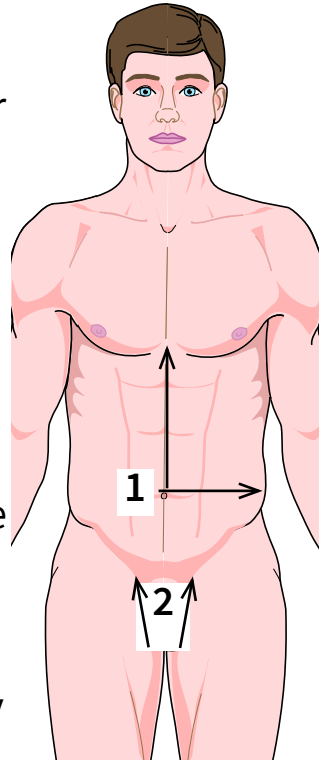
- Before you come to the hospital, use the CHG cloths to clean your skin. How you use the cloths will depend on the type of surgery you are having. Follow the instructions on:
  - › Page 3 for all aneurysm surgeries
  - › Page 4 for leg vascular surgery (including angioplasty)
- Your skin should be fully dry and cool before applying CHG.
- **Do not let the cloths touch your eyes, ears, or mouth.**
- **Do not** shower or bathe after using the CHG cloths.
- CHG works best when left on the skin. **Let the CHG dry fully. Do not rinse it off.**

If you have sensitive skin, CHG may cause skin irritation (like itching and/or redness). Showering or shaving right before applying CHG may make this worse. If itching or redness does not go away, rinse the irritated areas with **warm water** and stop using CHG. **Do not** use hot water.

- Follow any other instructions your health care team has given you. This pamphlet is **only** about preparing your skin before surgery.

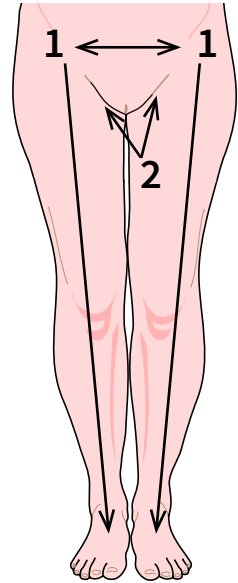
## Instructions for all aneurysm surgeries:

1. Using the **first cloth**, gently wipe your chest and belly:
    - › Start at the middle of your chest and wipe down to your belly button.
    - › Wipe from your belly button to your **left side** (between your left ribs and your left hip).
  2. Using the **second cloth**, wipe **both groins** (where the bottom of your belly meets the inner part of the tops of your legs):
    - › Make sure you wipe in any skin folds (**not** inside your genitals).
- After using the 2 cloths, let your skin dry for **1 minute**.
  - **Do not** rinse any part of your skin. Your skin may feel sticky for a few minutes after using the cloths. This is normal. It will go away as the CHG dries.
  - Dress in clean clothes.



# Instructions for leg vascular surgery, including angioplasty:

1. Using the **first cloth**, gently wipe the inside, front, and backs of your legs, including your hips:
    - › Start at your hip and wipe down towards your ankle.
  2. Using the **second cloth**, gently wipe **both groins** (where the bottom of your belly meets the inner part of the tops of your legs):
    - › Make sure you wipe in between any skin folds (**not** inside your genitals).
- After using the 2 cloths, let your skin dry for **1 minute**.
  - **Do not** rinse any part of your skin. Your skin may feel sticky for a few minutes after using the cloths. This is normal. It will go away as the CHG dries.
  - Dress in clean clothes.



## Reminders

- **Do not let the cloths touch your eyes, ears, or mouth.**
- If you have any questions, call the number on the front cover of this pamphlet.



### **Looking for more health information?**

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: <https://library.nshealth.ca/PatientEducation>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time: call 811 or visit <https://811.novascotia.ca>

Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

*Nova Scotia Health promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.*

*Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!*

[www.nshealth.ca](http://www.nshealth.ca)

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If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.