

Skin Preparation for Cardiac Surgery

Occasionally bacteria living on the skin can cause infections following cardiac procedures. To reduce the risk of infections we will use a body scrub to reduce the number of bacteria present on your/your child's skin before their procedure.

On the morning of their procedure, each child will need to have a shower using chlorhexidine scrubs.

How to use the Chlorhexidine scrubs

For babies:

- First bath, bath the baby in the usual way using baby bath or soap and use flannels or sponges to remove any visible dirt or debris from the skin.
- If there are sticky marks on the skin from tapes or ecg dots, ask your nurse for some wipes to remove these.
- *Before you start the chlorhexidine scrubs the skin must look completely clean.*
- Lift the baby out of the bath onto a clean towel. It is really important that you replace the bath water with clean water.
- Second bath, unwrap one chlorhexidine sponge and rub to form foam. Apply the sponge to the skin in circular motions over the whole body. Pay particular attention to the chest, neck, underarms, hands and groin. **DO NOT apply the chlorhexidine foam to the head, face, eyes or ears.**
- Rinse all of the foam away using the clean water.
- Dry the skin with a clean towel.
- Put the baby in clean clothes/pyjamas or theatre gown (if on the morning of surgery).
- If they are going to bed put them into clean bed linen.

For older children:

- First wash, shower in usual manner using soap, or shower gel and use flannels or sponges to remove any visible dirt or debris from the skin.
- If there are sticky marks on the skin from tapes or ecg dots, ask your nurse for some wipes to remove these.
- *Before you start the chlorhexidine scrubs the skin must look completely clean.*
- Second wash, unwrap one chlorhexidine sponge and rub to form foam. Apply the sponge to the skin in circular motions over the whole body. Pay particular attention to the chest, neck, underarms, hands and groin. **DO NOT apply the chlorhexidine foam to the head, face, eyes or ears.**
- Rinse all of the foam away using the clean water.
- Dry the skin with a clean towel.
- Dress in clean clothes/pyjamas or theatre gown (if on the morning of surgery).
- If they are going to bed put them into clean bed linen.

Precautions

- Do NOT use the chlorhexidine scrubs if you have an allergy to chlorhexidine.
- Do NOT apply to your head, face, eyes or ears.
- Do NOT scrub the skin vigorously - a gentle lather and rinse is all that is required.

If you have any questions about this skin preparation programme, please speak with your nurse.