



## **Pre Operative Showering Protocol**

### **Total Knee Arthroplasty**

#### **Background Information**

Taking a shower with an antibacterial soap will decrease the number of normal bacteria (germs) on your body. The germs that you carry on your body may cause an infection at your surgical site. We advise patients having surgery to use a special antibacterial soap called Chlorhexidine the morning of their surgery. If you have any allergies or sensitivities to Chlorhexidine, do not use the sponge provided. Ask your doctor to recommend an appropriate substitute.

#### **Instructions**

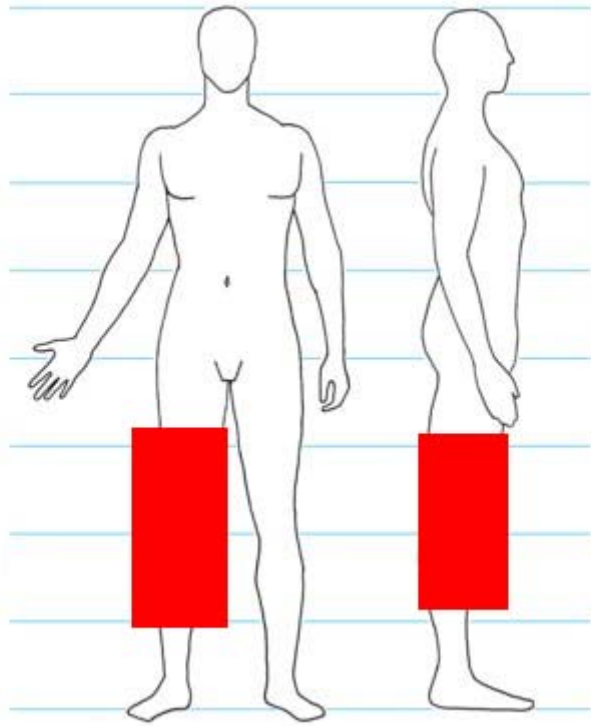
- The morning of your surgery shower with the Chlorhexidine sponge provided (or another antibacterial soap if directed by your doctor)
- Discard the blue plastic nail cleaner
- Wash the area that you will be having surgery on using the sponge side only see Figure 1 below for details
- Do not use the brush side on your skin as this may cause irritation
- Be sure to completely rinse off all of the soap
- Follow the safety precautions on the package
- The used sponge may be thrown away in your regular garbage

**NOTE:** If you are unable to take a shower using the Chlorhexidine sponge inform the nurse when you check in for surgery. The OR team may use a special cleansing product before your surgery.

#### **References**

AHFS Drug Information 2006

Guideline for Prevention of Surgical Site Infection, 1999, Journal of Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology  
Figure 1



Use the sponge to wash the leg you are having surgery on from about mid thigh to mid calf as shown above. Avoid contact with eyes, nose, mouth, delicate tissue, open sores, and genitals. If you will be having surgery on both knees, you may clean both legs with the sponge. Be sure to completely rinse off the soap.