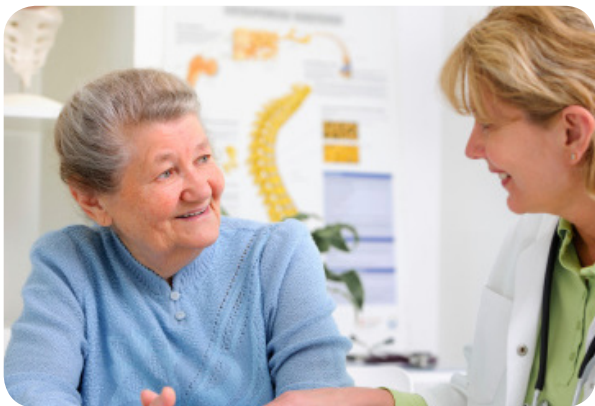


Important topics to discuss with your health care provider before your surgery.

You can do three very important things to help your body fight off infections and heal well after surgery. Talk with your doctor before your surgery if these topics are relevant for you.

1. Be at a healthy weight.
2. Do not smoke before surgery or during your recovery after surgery.
3. Keep your diabetes under control before surgery and during your recovery after surgery.



MY QUESTIONS AND NOTES

MORE INFORMATION

American College of Surgeons
www.facs.org/patienteducation/surgery.html

Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology
www.consumers.site.apic.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov/HAI/ssi/ssi.html

Institute for Healthcare Improvement
www.ihl.org/Engage/Initiatives/Completed/ProjectJOINTS/Pages/default.aspx

What Can I do to Prevent an Infection After Surgery?



Wisconsin
Department of Health Services

Division of Public Health
Bureau of Communicable Disease
P-01228 (03/2016)

What is this about? Why is this information important?

Infections sometimes develop after surgery in the area of the body where the surgery took place. These are called “Surgical Site Infections” or SSIs.

Every year in Wisconsin, hundreds of people develop SSIs, causing people to suffer and adding to the cost of their health care. The patient is an important partner in solving this problem. If patients and their health care teams work together, most SSIs are preventable!

This brochure provides suggestions about what you can do to prevent SSIs and offers ideas about topics to discuss with your health care provider.

Before your surgery, please discuss the lists in this brochure with your doctor. Talk with your doctor about what is appropriate for you.

What can you do?

BEFORE SURGERY:

- ◆ Use medicine in your nose if you have tested positive for staph bacteria.
- ◆ Answer as accurately as possible all questions your health providers ask about your medications, vitamins, supplements and lifestyle.
- ◆ Do not shave around the area of your body where the surgery will take place for at least two days before surgery.
- ◆ Take two showers using “**CHG soap” to wash the surgical area or follow instructions to use “CHG cloths” to clean the surgical area.

AFTER SURGERY:

- ◆ Tell your doctor or nurse if you are in pain. Take pain medications as directed.
- ◆ Wash your hands before touching your wound or changing surgical bandages.
- ◆ Call your doctor if you have a fever, increased pain, drainage or redness/swelling around the surgical wound.
- ◆ Make sure you understand instructions for care at home; ask questions if you are unsure.

What can you ask your health care provider to do?

BEFORE SURGERY:

- ◆ Test me for staph bacteria, and if positive, give me medicine to apply in my nose.
- ◆ Give me “CHG soap/cloths” or tell me where I can get these on my own.
- ◆ Give me antibiotics at the right time, if necessary. Adjust antibiotic amount, based on my weight.
- ◆ Use clippers (not a razor) if hair needs to be removed from my body.

DURING SURGERY:

- ◆ Use an alcohol-based “CHG” skin prep in the operating room.
- ◆ Keep my blood sugar levels below 200 mg/dl.
- ◆ Keep my body temperature and oxygen at recommended levels.

AFTER SURGERY:

Give me clear instructions about the care I will need at home after I leave the hospital.

** CHG (chlorhexidine gluconate) is an antiseptic skin cleanser.