

Preventing Surgical Site Infection

A **surgical site** is the place on your child's body where they have surgery. Germs in this area can lead to a **surgical site infection**. Together, you and your child's healthcare team can help reduce the risk of infection.

01.

The night before, or the morning of surgery



Your child must shower or bathe

Their whole body must be as clean as possible. Use antimicrobial soap or regular soap.



Do not shave the surgical site

Shaving before surgery can double the risk of infection. Shaving can cause small cuts and scrapes on the skin where germs can enter and multiply.

02.

The morning of surgery at home, or in hospital



Use chlorhexidine gluconate (CHG 2%) wipes

Healthcare teams recommend CHG 2% wipes before some surgeries. These wipes target many different germs. They decrease the number of germs on the skin for up to 6 hours.

03.

The morning of surgery, in hospital



Keep your child warm

If your child feels cold before or after surgery, please ask your healthcare team for warm blankets. Your healthcare team will tell you if they will use a forced air warming blanket, called a Bair Hugger, to keep your child warm.

04.

After surgery, in hospital and at home



Keep hands, surgical site, and dressing clean

Clean your hands well, at the right times. Use alcohol-based hand rub, or soap & water:

- Before touching your child's wound or dressing;
- After visiting the toilet;
- Before & after touching your child's IV line, drainage bag, or tube



Visitors must not touch your child's wound or dressing.



Talk to your healthcare team about hand hygiene.

You are welcome to ask any healthcare team member if we have cleaned our hands.

Your healthcare team will:

- Answer your questions about preventing infection
- Teach you how to care for your child's surgical site; &
- Give you a discharge sheet that explains how you can care for your child at home.



Want more information?

Visit <http://www.bcchildrens.ca/our-services/hospital-services/procedures-surgical-services> or Scan the QR code