



# Spine Surgery

ENHANCED RECOVERY AFTER SURGERY



UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND  
MEDICAL SYSTEM

<i>Check once complete</i>	<b>Spine Surgery Patient Checklist</b>
<b><i>Before Surgery</i></b>	
	Complete assigned education programs
	Ask about rehabilitation or exercise before your surgery
	Make sure you have someone at home who can support you after surgery
	Discuss pain management plan during your stay and once you leave the hospital/surgical area
	Schedule your post-operative appointment with your doctor during your pre-operative visit
	Stop smoking/tobacco products and drinking alcohol
	Eat a balanced diet with 1 serving of high protein food 3-4 times a day. Tell your doctor if you're having trouble eating, eating less than normal, or losing weight.
<b><i>2 – 5 days before surgery</i></b>	
	Confirm care partner is available during and after surgery
	Pick up carbohydrate drink
	Start your nasal prep medication twice a day 5 days before surgery
	Pick up your skin prep wash
	Finalize preparing your home for when you return after surgery
	Stop blood thinning medications as directed by your physician ( <i>includes prescription blood thinners and over the counter drugs such as ibuprofen, Motrin and aspirin</i> )
	Stop shaving around your surgery site 2 days prior to surgery
<b><i>Day before surgery</i></b>	
	2 baths using the prescribed skin prep product, one in the morning and one in the evening
	Drink 10 oz. carbohydrate drink as directed by your physician
	Take your medications as directed by your primary physician and surgical team (blood pressure, diabetic medications).
<b><i>Day of surgery</i></b>	
	Drink 10 oz. carbohydrate drink as directed by your physician
	No solid food after midnight
	Clear liquid up to 2 hours before surgery unless told differently by your physician
	One bath in the morning using the prescribed skin prep product
	Take your medications as directed by your physician (blood pressure, diabetic medications)
<b><i>After surgery is complete</i></b>	
	Drink clear fluids as tolerated & diet may advance as you improve
	Your nurse or therapist will get you out of bed and help you take steps the day of your surgery
<b><i>Before you leave the hospital</i></b>	
	Discuss your pain management plan with your care team (to include medication and ice)
	Discuss discharge plan with the surgical team. Most patients receive home care or start therapy in an outpatient setting.
	Make sure you have your discharge paperwork and education
	Make sure you have a follow up appointment scheduled.
	Make sure you have your assistive devices for walking or self-care before you leave

## **Spine Surgery Booklet**

### **Important Facts**

***You will have the best possible care to help you recover as soon as possible after surgery that includes Enhanced Recovery after Surgery or ERAS. ERAS includes cleaning your skin with special germ-killing product, drinking specific carbohydrate containing liquids within 2 – 4 hours of your surgery and walking on the day of your surgery.***

***Please note that you will need to have a physical within 30 days before your surgery, so make sure you have talked to your surgeon or their nursing staff about what the physical should include (e.g. Blood tests, chest x-rays and when)***

#### **1. Prepare for discharge with a care partner before you have your surgery:**

- It is very important that you select a family member or friend as a coach or care partner well before your surgery
- The coach/partner will offer:
  - Support and help decrease any anxiety
  - Help you with exercises
  - Attend classes and therapy sessions when recommended for you
  - Help you prepare for going home
  - Transportation from the hospital to home:
    - ✓ **You cannot drive yourself home**
    - ✓ Avoid low sports cars and higher vehicles like trucks for the drive home
  - Provide in-home support during the first week or longer if necessary
    - Most patients can expect to go home after surgery

#### **2. Exercise before surgery:**

- Consult with your physician or physical therapist that may be prescribed before surgery
- If you are already getting physical therapy, continue to exercise as recommended

#### **3. Make sure you get the nutrition you need for at least a month before surgery**

- Aim to eat 1 serving of high protein food 3-4 times a day
  - High protein foods include: chicken, fish, beef, pork, tofu/tempeh, dairy, eggs, and beans/lentils
    - 1 serving of meat, fish, or tofu/tempeh is 3 oz or roughly the size of a deck of cards
    - 1 serving of beans or lentils is ½ cup, or the size of a tennis ball
    - 1 serving of eggs is 2 eggs
    - 1 serving of dairy is:
      - ✓ 8 oz of milk or yogurt
      - ✓ 1 oz of cheese, or the size of tic tac box
      - ✓ Note: almond, coconut and oat milk are not good sources of protein
- If you cannot eat enough protein, you may need to drink a protein drink.
  - Look for one with 20 g protein per serving
  - If you have diabetes, look for one low in added sugars

- Premier protein, Ensure Max, and Boost max are all good options
- Glucerna may not give you enough protein
  - Protein powders and ready to drink shakes are both fine. Unflavored protein powder can be mixed into beverages, broths and soups, or soft foods like mashed potatoes or yogurt.
- Tell your doctor if you're eating less than normal, if you're having trouble eating, or if you're losing weight without trying, or if you're having a hard time following these instructions.

#### **4. Drinking a carbohydrate beverage before surgery: (Follow your physicians instructions)**

- **If you do not have diabetes**, should drink 10oz of clear carbohydrate beverage with or without sugar; including sports, nutritional or clear fruit juice at bedtime and up to 2 hours before your surgery
- **If you have diabetes**, it is very important to speak to your physician about:
  - What type of carbohydrate you should drink
  - How much insulin you should use before surgery and when a decrease in the amount of insulin is discussed, make sure you know by how much and when (Timing of your carbohydrate beverage will differ from non-diabetic patients)
- **If you have other stomach issues**, it is very important to speak to your physician about drinking carbohydrate beverages

#### **5. Fluids before surgery – clear liquids only (must follow your physician's recommendations)**

- Clear fluids are OK until 2 hours before your surgery
  - **Except** If you have regular nausea, diabetes, ongoing stomach and/or swallowing difficulty, then clear fluids up to 4 hours prior to surgery
- Clear liquid can be seen through
  - Clear liquid examples:
    - Water
    - Gatorade (not red or purple)
    - Kool-Aid (no red or purple), Sodas, tea, coffee (no cream)
    - Gelatin (not red or purple and without fruit)
    - Popsicles (no red or purple and without fruit or cream)
    - Juices without pulp: apple, white grape juice
    - You may use salt, pepper and sugar

#### **6. Chlorhexidine (CHG) germ killing treatment before surgery:**

- Your doctor will prescribe a skin cleaning treatment to prevent infections after your surgery
- CHG is a germ-killing product used that comes as:
  - ✓ disposable washcloths (use instructions on package) or
  - ✓ liquid soap (see attached instructions)
- *You should not use product on your face around your eyes, mouth or ears*
- *You should clean your skin using the product prescribed 3 times:*
  - morning before your surgery
  - evening before your surgery
  - morning of your surgery

#### **7. Shaving:**

- You should not shave around the area of your surgery at least 2 days prior to surgery
- Shaving can nick your skin that can cause an infection

### **8. Nasal cleansing:**

- A common germ can be found on the skin and other warm, moist areas of all people (Staphylococcus) but usually does not cause problems
- This germ is one of the leading causes of infections after many surgeries
- **How you should use your nasal cleaning product: (Mupirocin ointment 2%)**
  - You will need to apply it to both nostrils
  - You should be given, or be asked to pick up, tube(s) of Mupirocin (Bactroban) from the pharmacy
  - Place a small amount of ointment on a Q-tip and put on the inside front part of each nostril
  - Gently press your nostrils together and release several times (for about a minute) to spread the ointment through your nostrils
  - If you receive 10 individual small tubes of ointment, put half of the ointment from the tube into one nostril and the other half into the other nostril
  - Gently press your nostrils together and release several times (for about a minute) to spread the ointment through your nostrils
  - This should be done in the morning and evening for 5 days prior to your surgery

### **9. Pain management using several types of medicine or treatments:**

- The pain you feel before your surgery is different than pain you will feel after surgery
- You may have some discomfort after surgery, which can continue through your recovery
  - It is important to set realistic expectations about pain while you are healing
  - Healing can take several months or up to a year for full recovery
  - In general, narcotic medications alone cannot relieve all pain although you will have other non-narcotic medications to relieve pain
- Other ways to decrease pain:
  - Cold therapy
  - Therapeutic breathing
  - Meditation
  - Guided imagery
  - Aromatherapy
  - Activities, such as coloring, puzzles, hobbies and word searches
- You just had major surgery and will need rest periods

### **10. Preventing blood clots in your veins:**

- One of the risks after surgery is developing a blood clot
- To reduce the risk of blood clots, you will be encouraged to walk to increase blood flow in your legs
- Blood thinning medication may be prescribed after surgery
- Your care team in the hospital will discuss this with you and the discharge instructions will explain what medications to stop and which ones to start
- The discharge instructions also include when to call the care team with possible problems

### **11. Preventing post-operative infection:**

- To prevent pneumonia after your surgery you will be encouraged to:
  - use an incentive spirometer (10 times each hour)
  - cough and take deep breaths
  - get up and move to prevent pneumonia
- Hand hygiene is very important to help prevent infection
  - If you must touch your incision, be sure to wash your hands thoroughly before and after with soap and water

### **12. Early ambulation: (Unless your physician says differently)**

- You can expect to get out of bed the day of and the day after surgery because this helps with your recovery
- You can also expect the nursing staff will get you out of bed and help you with walking, If physical therapy (PT) is ordered they will see you for an evaluation
- An occupational therapist (OT) may see you to make sure you can complete your self-care by yourself
- *Please be aware that moving early in your recovery improves healing, decreases potential blood clots in your veins*

## CHG Treatment

### How to bath before your procedure/surgery

We want you to shower with special soap or wipes called chlorhexidine gluconate (CHG) or germ killing treatment before surgery. A shower using this soap or wipes will reduce your risk of getting an infection. It is very important that you bathe with this treatment **on the day before in the morning, night before and the morning of your surgery.**

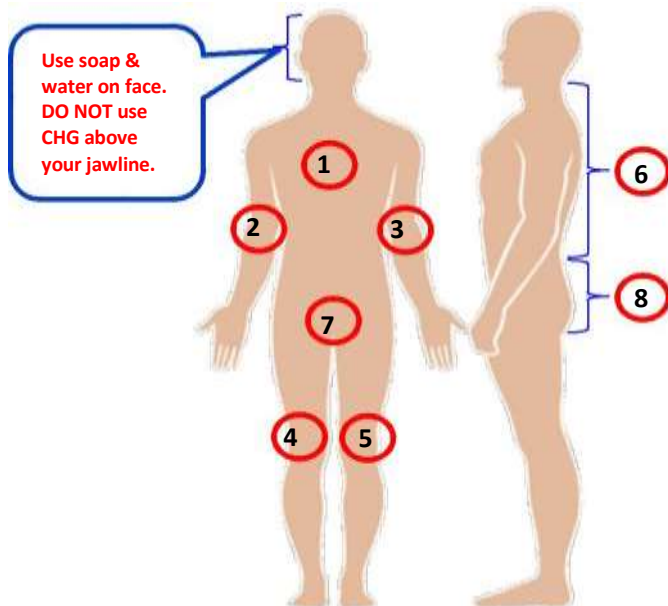
### Why do I need to shower with CHG or Hibiclens?

- This soap is better at removing germs on your skin.
- CHG works for 24 hours.
- Surgeries, drains, some medicines and being ill make it easier to get an infection.
- It helps keep you from getting an infection.
- Hospitals have germs that are hard to treat. These germs are called super bugs.

If using wipes, please follow instructions on packaging.

### How to shower using CHG soap

- In the shower or tub, wash your hair/face/genitalia as usual with your normal shampoo/conditioner or soap.
  - Rinse the hair and body thoroughly to remove soap and shampoo residue.
  - Turn water off to avoid rinsing Hibiclens off too soon.
  - With a fresh clean wash cloth, apply the Hibiclens soap liberally to your entire body, from the neck down.
- Follow the picture below going from number 1 to 8.**
- Make no contact with your eyes, ears, mouth, internal genitals, or open wounds.
  - Wash the body gently for five minutes, paying special attention to the area where the procedure will be done.
  - Turn the water back on and rinse the body thoroughly.
  - Pat dry with a clean, soft towel.
  - Dress in clean pajamas or clothes.
  - Use clean sheets on your bed after washing.



- ✓ **DO NOT** wash with regular soap after the Hibiclens is used.
- ✓ **DO NOT** put lotions, powders or oils on your skin after bathing.
- ✓ **If you feel itchy or if your skin turns red**, rinse your skin with water and stop using the product and contact your physician or their office

1 = neck, chest and tummy

2 and 3 = Both arms, arm pits, hands  
and fingers

4 and 5 = Both legs, feet and toes

6 = Back of neck, back, and shoulders

7 = Between your legs and private parts

8 = Bottom



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