

## Surgical preparation of the skin - tips and tricks

In orthopaedics, preparation of the skin usually takes longer than usual as it is a large area to clip and prep.

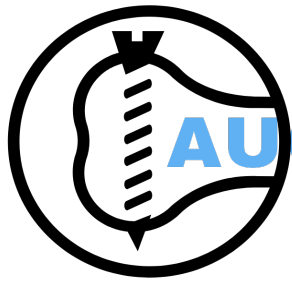
### Hair clipping

- please clip the hair in prep room.
- first clip with the grain, second clip against the grain. This reduces the risk of skin rash.
- remember, more clip is better. Please use new/sterilised blades for orthopaedic procedures
- if possible, please vacuum the loose hair.
- wrap the foot in vetrap/elastoplast unless the surgery is on toes
- please suspend the leg whilst leg is being prepped.

### Prepping of the surgical site

- please use examination gloves during skin prep
- as per standard, please prep the skin with chlorhexidine 4% either concentrated or diluted 1:1 with water; please do not dilute more than this ratio
- use non-sterile swabs for skin prep
- use to and fro and zig-zag pattern to clean the skin, from inside out; use a new swab each time you reach the end of the clipped area
- the standard circular motion pattern has been proven inferior to the to/fro and zig-zag pattern
- use pressure as it increases the efficacy of the antiseptic solution
- the cleaning stage should take a minimum 7min. Chlorhexidine is a contact agent and it needs at least 4 minutes to effectively kill the bacteria
- the nerve block is usually performed at this stage
- the patient is transported in the theatre with minimal handling of the surgical site





## Final skin prep

- leg should be hanged and the surgeon will guide you in regards to the final position
- we will provide a single use scrubbing cartridge for a final clean to be done at this stage; this product has a residual activity of 48 hours
- squeeze the wings of the cartridge once, like you mean it – this will break the inner ampule – do not worry, the ampule will remain safe inside the cartridge
- wait for the solution to reach the sponge but do not squeeze the cartridge to force it out
- the cartridge sponge should be used with a to and fro pattern on the incision site for at least 30 seconds, then continue to the periphery
- do not touch the skin with anything else after this step!

## During surgery

- please do not touch the trolley or the surgical equipment unless you are gowned and gloved

## After surgery

- follow up xrays are necessary to confirm a satisfactory surgery
- please make sure the xray machine is available for this step
- please do not touch the trolley and the kit unless the surgeon confirms it
- most of a times, a light dressing is applied to the limb to reduce the postoperative swelling

