

# Patient Information Sheet: Skin Care Guidelines Before Surgery



## Why is it important to take special care of my skin before surgery?

Taking good care of your skin before surgery helps reduce your risk of infection. Cuts, scrapes, or skin conditions can introduce bacteria, which may cause complications or delay your healing. In some cases, your surgery may be **postponed or cancelled** if your skin is not in good condition on the day of your procedure. This can also include areas of your skin which are away from the intended surgery site.

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## One week before surgery

Start preparing your skin early by following these simple steps:

- **Avoid activities that may cause cuts or scrapes**, such as:
  - Gardening
  - Diving
  - DIY or home repairs
  - Contact sports or adventure pursuits
- **Shower or bathe regularly** to keep your skin clean
- **Moisturise daily** if your skin is dry or cracked
  - *However, stop using moisturiser the day before surgery*

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## The night before surgery

- **Take a shower or bath** to clean your skin thoroughly
- **Use any medicated disposable wipes** if provided – follow the instructions carefully
- **Wear clean bedclothes** to reduce the risk of bacteria

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## The morning of surgery

- **Shower or bathe again** on the morning of your surgery
- **Do NOT shave** the area where you're having surgery
- **Use medicated wipes** again if they have been provided
- **Wear clean, warm clothes** to hospital
- **Remove nail polish** if your surgery is on your hands, arms, feet, or legs (includes gel & powder nails)
- **Avoid wearing make-up or using moisturiser**
- **Remove all jewellery and piercings** (if you're able to)

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## Final advice

Following these guidelines helps ensure your skin is in the best possible condition for surgery – reducing your risk of infection and supporting a smooth recovery.

If you have **any areas of broken skin, rashes, acne, or other skin concerns**, please contact us **before your surgery date**. It's important we assess any potential issues early, as they may affect your ability to proceed with surgery.

If you're unsure or have any questions about these instructions, don't hesitate to get in touch with a member of our healthcare team.