Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# How to Bathe Using 2% CHG Cloths

This information explains how to use 2% CHG (chlorhexidine gluconate) cloths to clean your skin while you're in the hospital. In this resource, the words "you" and "your" refer to you or your child.

During cancer treatment, your body has a harder time fighting infections. If you have a central venous catheter (CVC), such as an implanted port (MediPort®), tunneled chest catheter, or peripherally inserted central catheter (PICC), you have a higher risk of getting a serious blood infection. Bathing with 2% CHG cloths every day will help lower your risk of getting a blood infection while you're in the hospital.

## About using 2% CHG cloths

CHG is a liquid that kills germs (bacteria) and keeps more germs from growing. 2% CHG cloths are cloth wipes that are wet with CHG and water. You'll use each wipe once, then throw it away.

2% CHG cloths are safe for most people, but don't use them without talking with your healthcare provider first. Stop using 2% CHG cloths and tell your healthcare provider if your skin is irritated (for example, red, itchy, or burning) or you get a rash.

## How to bathe using 2% CHG cloths

- Clean your skin with 2% CHG cloths every day.
- The 2% CHG cloths can be warmed in a special warmer. If you want to warm the cloths, ask your nurse for help. Never use a microwave to warm the cloths.
- If you want to, you can shower or bathe with soap and warm water before

using the 2% CHG cloths. Use a clean towel to dry your skin completely.

- Don't use 2% CHG cloths to clean up stool (poop), urine (pee), or other liquids.
    - If your child wears a diaper, clean and dry their bottom the way you usually do (for example, using baby wipes) before using the 2% CHG cloths.

## How many cloths to use

The number of cloths you use depends on your weight. Your nurse will tell you how many to use and give you the right number.

Check off one of the boxes below to help you remember.

☐ Use 2 cloths if you weigh less than 22 pounds (10 kilograms).

☐ Use 4 cloths if you weigh 22 to 66 pounds (10 to 30 kilograms).

☐ Use 6 cloths if you weigh more than 66 pounds (30 kilograms).

## Instructions for using the cloths

How you use the cloths depends on how many you're using. Your nurse will show you how to use them. Follow these instructions to help you remember.

- Don't use the cloths on your face or head.
- Don't use the cloths on your anus or genital area (vaginal area or the tip of your penis).
- Don't use the cloths on areas of skin breakdown, open wounds, or incisions (surgical cuts).
- After using the wipes, and before eating or placing your hands in your mouth, wash your hands with soap and water.

1. Wash your hands with soap and warm water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

2. Use the 2% CHG cloths to wipe your skin. Use a circular or back-and-forth motion. Start closer to your head and work your way down towards your feet.

☐ **If you weigh less than 22 pounds (10 kilograms), use 2 cloths (see Figure 1).**

1. Use the first cloth for your neck, shoulders, chest, abdomen (belly), back, arms, and hands. Don't wipe your hands if you put them in your mouth.
2. Use the second cloth for your legs, feet, buttocks, and groin. Make sure to wipe the skin creases between your upper legs and groin. Avoid your anus and genital area.

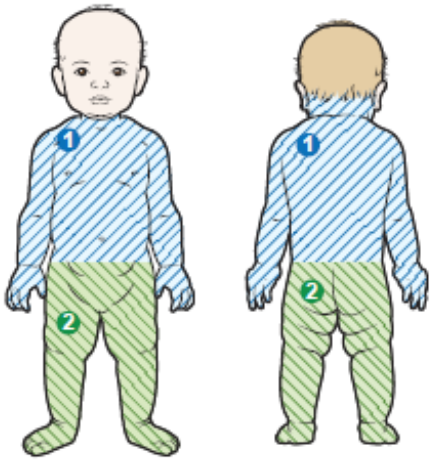


Figure 1. Use 2 cloths if you weigh less than 22 pounds (10 kilograms)

☐ **If you weigh 22 to 66 pounds (10 to 30 kilograms), use 4 cloths (see Figure 2).**

1. Use the first cloth for your neck, chest, abdomen (belly), and groin. Make sure to wipe the skin creases between your upper legs and groin. Avoid your genital area.
2. Use the second cloth for your shoulders, arms, and hands. Don't wipe your hands if you put them in your mouth.
3. Use the third cloth for your back and buttocks. Avoid your anus.
4. Use the fourth cloth for your legs and feet.

☐ **If you weigh more than 66 pounds (30 kilograms), use 6 cloths (see Figure 3).**

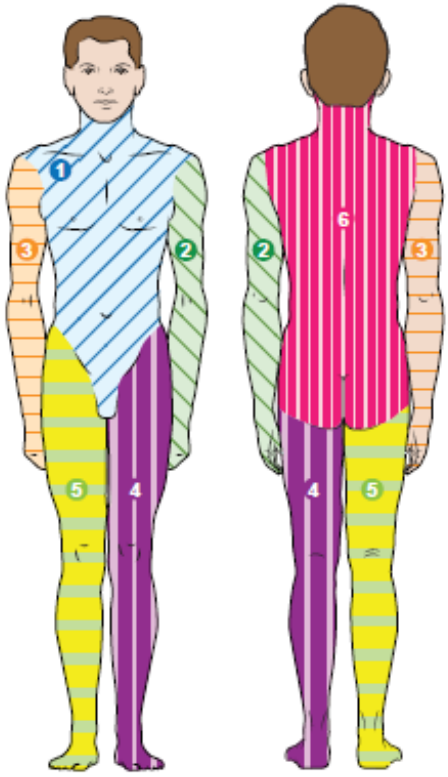



Figure 3. Use 6 cloths if you weigh more than 66 pounds (30 kilograms)

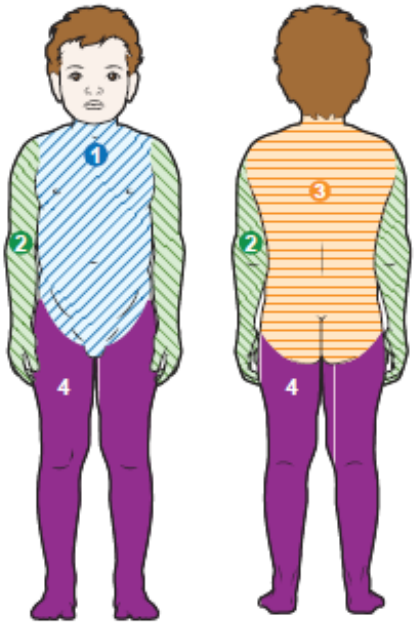



Figure 2. Use 4 cloths if you weigh 22 to 66 pounds (10 to 30 kilograms)

1. Use the first cloth for your neck, chest, abdomen (belly), and groin. Make sure to wipe the skin creases between your upper legs and groin. **Avoid your genital area.**
2. Use the second cloth for your left shoulder, arm, and hand. Don't wipe your hand if you put your hands in your mouth.
3. Use the third cloth for your right shoulder, arm, and hand. Don't wipe your hand if you put your hands in your mouth.
4. Use the fourth cloth for your left leg and foot.
5. Use the fifth cloth for your right leg and foot.
6. Use the sixth cloth for your back and buttocks. Avoid your anus.

3. Let your skin air dry. **Don't use a towel to dry your skin.**
   - It may take up to 2 minutes for your skin to dry.
   - Your skin may feel sticky while it dries. This is from lotions in the cloths. The sticky feeling will go away as your skin dries.

- Check between the skin folds on your neck or other places on your body. Make sure the skin is dry.

4. Throw the used 2% CHG cloths in the trash. **Don't flush the cloths down the toilet.**

# What to do after using 2% CHG cloths

- Put on clean clothes.
- Don't get into your bed until your bed linens are changed. Your nurse or nursing assistant will change them.
- If you need to clean your skin or put on lotion after using the cloths, ask your nurse for products that you can use. **Don't use any products except the ones your nurse gives you.** This includes deodorant and soap. Using any other product on top of the CHG will make the CHG stop working.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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