



South Eastman Health/Santé Sud-Est Inc.

	No: AC-P021 / SC-PRE009
Approved By: Facility Managers	Source: Regional Client Care Manual Category: Acute Care, Surgical Care
New/Replaces Date Approved: 11 Dec 2009 Reviewed: Revised: 4 May 10	Subject: Pre-operative Surgical Site Hair Removal

POLICY:

To minimize the risks of developing a post operative surgical site infection, removal of hair at the surgical site will be avoided.

PROCEDURE:

1. Pre operative surgical site hair removal will be avoided
2. If required, the recommended option for hair removal is via hair clipper, as it is least irritating to the skin.
3. Use of a depilatory cream is also acceptable; however it must be used with caution due to the possibility of skin irritation from the product.
4. The use of razors is not recommended.
5. The pre-admission nurse shall inform the patient whether or not hair removal is necessary.
6. If hair removal is required, the nurse shall provide instructions **not to shave** but rather to use a hair clipper or a depilatory cream. If the patient chooses to use a depilatory cream, the nurse will instruct the patient to perform a skin test (away from the proposed surgical site) to ensure no allergic skin reaction occurs thus preventing skin reaction at the surgical site.
7. **When Removing Hair Using an Electric Hair Clipper:**
Clip hair as close as possible to the scheduled surgical procedure time (in an area outside of the operating room)

- The nurse/designate shall perform hand hygiene and assemble the required supplies:
 - Surgical prep book
 - Disposable clean gloves
 - Hospital approved electric hair clipper with disposable single patient use clipper blade
 - Incontinent pad
 - Towel, facecloth
- Greet and verify identification of correct patient and correct surgical site.
- Explain procedure to patient.
- Provide patient privacy and maintain patient dignity.
- Don gloves.
- Place disposable incontinent pad under surgical preparation area.
- Clip the surgical site area.
- Once hair clipping is completed:
 - Wipe the area with a clean wet washcloth to remove loose hair.
 - Pat the area dry with dry washcloth/towel.
- Remove and discard hair and incontinent pad.
- Dispose of soiled laundry in dirty laundry bag.
- Remove and discard the disposable/single patient use clipper blade in an approved sharps container
- Clean and disinfect the reusable clipper handle after use.

8. Removing Hair Using a Depilatory Cream

- The nurse/designate shall perform hand hygiene and assemble the required supplies:
 - Surgical prep book
 - Disposable clean gloves
 - Hospital approved depilatory cream
 - Incontinent pad
 - Towel, facecloth
- Greet and verify identification of correct patient and correct surgical site.
- Explain procedure to patient.
- Provide patient privacy and maintain patient dignity.
- Don gloves.
- Place disposable incontinent pad under surgical preparation area.
- Following the manufacturer's written instructions, perform a skin sensitivity test on a skin site away from the proposed surgical site.
- If an allergic skin reaction occurs discontinue use immediately.
- If the use of depilatory is deemed safe apply cream to area.
- Once depilatory cream action time is completed:
 - Remove cream with facecloth.
 - Wipe the area with a clean wet washcloth.
 - Pat dry with a clean washcloth/towel.
- Remove and discard the incontinent pad.
- Dispose of soiled laundry in dirty laundry bag.

Any hair not completely removed by the depilatory cream, should be removed using a hospital approved hair clipper, as close as possible to the scheduled surgical procedure time in an area outside of the operating room.

Documentation

- The nurse shall document whether or not hair removal was performed on the pre-operative record. If untoward signs and symptoms document on the Nurses Integrated Progress Notes.

References

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