

DECREASING SURGICAL SITE INFECTIONS...ONE CLOTH AT A TIME

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Background: Surgical site infections are the second most common healthcare-acquired infection and one of the most expensive for healthcare. The CDC estimates that 500,000 surgical site infections occur each year and the associated cost per surgical site infection is estimated to be greater than \$25,000 while the average length of stay is increased by 7.5 days. With the rising cost of healthcare, identifying opportunities to decrease SSI's continues to be a priority for our institution.

Objectives:

1. Identify strategies that will enhance the antimicrobial efficacy of the current preoperative skin prep completed by the patient while at home.
2. Provide education to staff and patients in the importance of infection prevention.
3. Implement an enhanced process to decrease surgical site infections utilizing a no rinse 2% CHG cloth on all patients meeting predetermined criteria that are having a surgical procedure.

Process of Implementation:

- Determine patient population to safely use CHG cloths.
- Identify projected surgery totals for cost and inventory control.
- Revise current preoperative skin prep policy to include targeted patient populations.
- Educate staff on correct use of CHG cloths.
- Provide teaching strategies to the staff for patient compliance.
- Process implemented in March 2013

Statement of Successful Practice: Improvement in the overall decrease in surgical site infections has been realized since the implementation of the no rinse 2% CHG cloth as part of the Preoperative skin prep regimen.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: Utilizing a broad spectrum antimicrobial cloth as part of the preoperative skin preparation in the surgical population promotes teamwork and partnerships between the nurse and patient for better surgical outcomes.