**Surgical Skin Prep Decision Guide**

### Patient Assessment
- Does the patient have any allergies or sensitivities?
  - CHG allergy or sensitivity: Use Iodophor-based product
  - Iodine sensitivity: Use CHG-based product
  - No known allergy or sensitivity: Use either Iodophor or CHG-based product

- Is the patient less than 2 months old?
  - Yes: Use either Iodophor or CHG-based product for Meninges or lumbar puncture, use Iodophor-based product
  - No: If open wound or trauma, no alcohol-based products may be used. See manufacturer’s instructions for use.

### Surgical Site Assessment
- Intact Skin?
  - Yes: Use either Iodophor or CHG-based product
  - No: Do not use alcohol-based products if contraindicated per manufacturer’s instructions for use.

- Eyes
  - Yes: Do not use alcohol-based products
  - No: Do not use CHG as it can cause corneal damage

- Ears
  - Yes: Do not use alcohol-based products if contraindicated per manufacturer’s instructions for use
  - No: Do not use CHG as it can cause deafness if in contact with the inner ear

- Mucous Membrane
  - Yes: CHG should be used with caution. Some CHG products prohibit use in genital area. See manufacturer’s instructions for use.
  - No: Use aqueous-based Iodophor product

### Surgical Factors
- Large amount of fluids? (saline and blood)
  - Yes: Use a water insoluble prep
  - No: Not a factor for prep selection

- Use of Incise drape? (orthopedic, cardiovascular, neurosurgery)
  - Yes: Water insoluble preps improve drape adhesion. Drape lift has been associated with a six-fold increase in surgical site infection.
  - No: Not a factor for prep selection

- Large prep area? (bariatric, cardiovascular surgery)
  - Yes: Coverage Area – Efficacy may also be linked to coverage area. Some preps cover more area per applicator than others. Check manufacturer’s coverage information. Using a prep beyond coverage specifications may affect efficacy. This may require more than one applicator to complete the patient prep.
  - No: Not a factor for prep selection

### Safety Factors
- Prep area with high microbial count? (groin, toes, fingernails, skin folds)
  - Yes: Consider the flammability risk due to increased oxygen levels (e.g., laser use, cautery) and take necessary precautions.
  - No: Additional precautions should be taken to minimize the risk of surgical fire. Follow manufacturer’s instructions for use and AORN Guidelines for Perioperative Practice.

- Will the patient’s airway be associated in the surgery?
  - Yes: Follow manufacturer’s instructions for use and AORN Guidelines for Perioperative Practice.

- Is a flammable prep used?
  - Yes: Follow manufacturer’s instructions for use and AORN Guidelines for Perioperative Practice.
  - No: Not a factor for prep selection

---

*This guide contains recommendations based on AORN 2018 Guidelines for Perioperative Practice; it is not meant to be all-inclusive of considerations.


Always follow manufacturer’s instructions for use.