**Perioperative Preparation: Skin Scrub and Hair Clipping**

I. **Outcome Goal:**

Preoperative skin preparation reduces the risk of postoperative surgical site infection by removing soil and transient microorganisms from the skin, reducing the resident microbial count to subpathogenic levels in a short period of time and with the least amount of tissue irritation, and inhibiting rapid rebound growth of microorganisms.

II. **Policy:**

When hair removal is part of the preoperative preparation, staff use clippers to remove hair at the intended operative site.

III. **Definitions:**

A. Surgical Pre-op Scrub – Preparation of the surgical site by hospital personnel immediately before surgery either in the patient’s room or in the Pre-Op Holding Room using an antiseptic agent.

B. Clip Prep – Removal of hair from the surgical site by hospital personnel immediately before the operation using clipper.
C. Home Prep – Preparation of the surgical site by the patient at home before the operation, as indicated by specialty home prep instructions.

IV. General Guidelines:
   A. Whenever possible, leave hair at the surgical site. If hair should be removed, remove hair according to physician’s orders and/or policies and procedures in the practice setting. Perform hair removal:
      1. As close to the time of surgery as possible, using clippers;
      2. In an area outside of the room where the procedure will be performed, and;
      3. In a manner that preserves skin integrity.
   B. Use an appropriate antiseptic/antimicrobial agent for skin preparation.
   C. For pediatric patients and all patients requiring scalp preps, complete preps in the operating room after the patient has been induced.
   D. Never shave the face or eyebrows, or cut the eyelashes unless specifically ordered by the surgeon.
   E. Clip hair in the direction in which it grows.
   F. Hold the skin taut to avoid pulling or nicking.

V. Procedures:
   A. Surgical Pre-Op Scrub:
      1. Assemble necessary supplies and equipment:
         a. Prep kit or wipe;
         b. Towels;
         c. Gloves.
      2. Verify the identification of the correct patient and correct site.
      3. Identify yourself and explain the procedure.
      4. Maintain patient privacy. (Note: parent(s) of minor children may stay with the patient.)
      5. Properly drape patient, exposing only the area being prepped. If the entire body is to be prepped, expose only one area at a time (e.g., arm, leg, chest, or abdomen) providing the patient with as much privacy and dignity as possible.
      6. Follow product-specific instructions for application of antiseptic product. In general, perform surgical scrub for 2 – 5 minutes moving in a circular motion beginning in the
center of the surgical area and working out toward the periphery.

B. **Clip Prep:**
   1. Assemble necessary supplies and equipment:
      a. Clippers;
      b. Clipper blades (single patient use);
      c. Towels.
   2. Verify the identification of the correct patient and correct site.
   3. Identify yourself and explain procedure.
   4. Don gloves.
   5. Properly drape patient, exposing only the area being prepped. If the entire body is to be prepped, expose only one area at a time (e.g., arm, leg, chest, or abdomen) providing the patient with as much privacy and dignity as possible.
   6. Remove the clipper blade from the package and place on clippers.
   7. Perform Clip Prep, keeping skin taut and clipping hair in the direction of growth.
   8. Rinse skin using a wet cloth to remove any loose hair.
   9. Carefully remove the drape, catching and removing as much loose hair as possible.
   10. Remove the clipper blade and dispose in sharps container.
   11. Disinfect all non-disposable items used in hair removal between patients.

C. **Home Prep:**
   1. Instruct the patient and family member/significant other on the proper procedure.
   2. Provide a home prep instruction sheet.
   3. Provide the appropriate wipe or solution.

VI. **Patient/Family Education:**

   Educate patient/family at the level of their understanding of the necessity of hair removal.

VII. **Documentation:**

   A. Document prep and hair removal, site and solution in the medical record.
   B. Document patient/family education in the medical record, as applicable by area.
VIII. **Web References:**

AORN (2005), Standards, Recommended Practices, and Guidelines p.443-444.


IX. **Endorsement:**

Clinical Practice Committee – March 2007

X. **Approval:**

Marilyn Dubree, Director, Patient Care Services & Chief Nursing Officer Date 4-02-07