



MRSA Decolonization

In the past few years, people have been exposed to a germ called *Staphylococcus aureus*. Some of these germs are resistant to certain antibiotics and are called Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA). The removal of MRSA is called “decolonization.” Sometimes, decolonization can help reduce the risk of spreading the germs to others and avoid infections in the future.

Based on your test results and your health needs, your doctor will determine if decolonization is appropriate for you. If your doctor prescribes decolonization, there are two parts to the treatment:

- Rubbing ointment into each of your nostrils twice a day for 5 days.
- Taking a shower or bath using a special soap once a day for up to 5 days while you are using the nasal ointment.

Your doctor may prescribe the ointment and soap, as well as oral medicines. Here is information about how to use the ointment and soap. You also may receive other instructions from your doctor. If you have any questions about the treatment, please call your doctor before you begin.

How to use the nasal ointment (mupirocin 2%)

Your ointment requires a prescription and will come in several small, single-use tubes or in one larger tube.

- If you have the small tubes, you should use half of a tube inside each nostril each time you apply the ointment. Throw away the small tube and use a new one next time.
 - If you have the large tube, you should use a pea-sized amount of ointment inside each nostril each time you apply the ointment. Save the large tube and use it for all your doses.
1. Clean your hands using a sanitizer gel or wash with soap and water for 15 to 20 seconds just before using your ointment.
 2. Tilt your head back and use a cotton swab to apply the ointment to the inside of each nostril.
 3. Press your nostrils together and massage for about 1 minute.
 4. Don't get the ointment near your eyes. • If any of it gets into your eyes, rinse them well with cool water.
 5. Apply the nasal ointment twice a day for 5 days unless otherwise directed by your doctor.
 6. Clean your hands using a sanitizer gel or wash with soap and water (for 15 to 20 seconds) as soon as you are finished.
- Do not use any topical medicines or inside the nose medicines (such as nasal sprays) during the 5 days you are using the ointment.

How to use the soap (4% chlorhexidine) (Hibiclens)

Your soap will come in either a bottle or in packets.

1. If you have packets, use two packets for each application in the shower or bath. If you have the bottle, use about 2 tablespoons of soap for each application in the shower or bath.
2. First, shampoo and rinse your hair with your usual shampoo. This is done first so the Hibiclens soap isn't washed off by your shampoo.
3. Using a clean washcloth, apply the Hibiclens to all areas, avoiding your face. **Keep out of your eyes, ears and mouth.** Make sure to wash your armpits, behind your ears and your knees, your groin area, and between any skin folds. The soap will not bubble or lather very much, and that is fine.
 - If you get the soap in your eyes, ears or mouth – rinse well with cool water.
4. When you've covered your whole body with the soap, do not rinse, but replenish the Hibiclens on your washcloth and repeat step 3.
5. When finished, leave the soap on your skin for 2 minutes.
6. Rinse the Hibiclens off your skin thoroughly. Do not wash with any other soap or cleanser.
7. Dry off with a clean towel and put on clean clothing.
8. Using lotion for dry skin is OK.