

# Preventing Infection

## Cleaning your nose with antiseptic before surgery

### What is nasal antiseptic?

Antiseptic [an-tah-SEP-tik] is a liquid that kills germs. Nasal antiseptic kills germs in the nose. It is usually put into the nose before surgery to help prevent infection. Intermountain uses an antiseptic that contains 5% povidone-iodine.

Nasal antiseptic ▶



### Why do I need it?

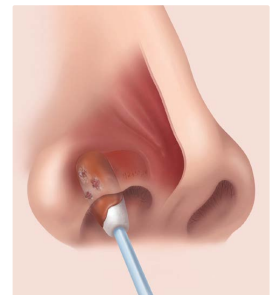
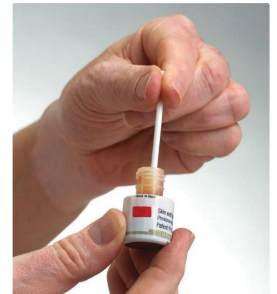
Out of every 10 people, 2 or 3 have a certain bacteria (*Staphylococcus aureus*) in their noses. These people are called “carriers.” This means they can have the bacteria and not know it. The bacteria can cause a serious infection called MRSA (*methicillin-resistant S. aureus*). MRSA does not respond very well to antibiotics and doesn’t have a vaccine. Using this antiseptic may lower your risk of MRSA infection.

**Do not use nasal antiseptic if you have an allergy to iodine or shellfish.** If you’re not sure, ask your healthcare provider if you should use it.

**If you have any questions, please ask one of your healthcare providers for help.**

### How to use nasal antiseptic

- 1 | Blow your nose and clean the inside of your nostrils with a tissue.
- 2 | Wash your hands with warm soapy water or use hand sanitizer.
- 3 | Put one (or both, if preferred) of the cotton-tipped swabs given to you into the bottle of antiseptic and stir. Remove. Do not wipe off the extra fluid.
- 4 | Put the swab in a nostril (can do both nostrils at the same time, if you prefer). Gently move it around the lower part of the nostril in a circular motion. Be sure to touch all surfaces inside the nostril. Do this while slowly counting to 60 (1 minute). Do steps 3 and 4 again to clean the other nostril, if needed.
- 5 | Using 2 new swabs, clean your nose a second time using steps 3 and 4.
- 6 | When finished, do not blow your nose. Throw away the swabs and let your nostrils air dry. If some of the solution drips out, wipe it lightly with a tissue. Repeat step 2.



**For use prior to surgery, and for patients with documented MRSA  
or a history of MRSA.**

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