

# Preventing Infection

## Cleaning your nose with a nasal antibiotic before surgery

### What is a nasal antibiotic?

A nasal antibiotic [an-tye-bye-AH-tik] is an ointment that kills bacteria in the nose. It is usually put into the nose before surgery to help prevent infection. Intermountain Health uses mupirocin [myoo-PEER-o-sin], which may be sold under the brand name Bactroban.



### Why do I need it?

Out of every 10 people, 2 or 3 have a bacteria called *Staphylococcus aureus* [staf-uh-low-CAW-cus] *aureus* [OR-ee-us] in their noses. This is completely normal. These people are called “carriers” because they carry the bacteria but do not know it. Carriers of this bacteria have a higher risk of infection with this bacteria after surgery. The infection can sometimes be severe and not respond well to antibiotics. Using this antiseptic may lower your risk of getting a *Staphylococcus aureus* infection.

**Do not use nasal antibiotic if you have an allergy to mupirocin.** If you are not sure, ask your healthcare provider if you should use it.

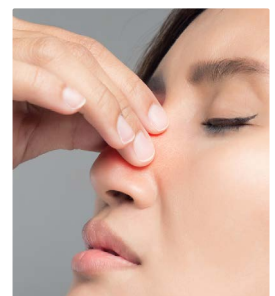
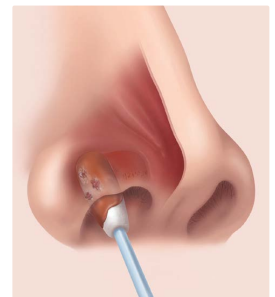
**If you have any questions, please ask one of your healthcare providers for help.**

### How to use nasal antibiotic

Pick up your prescription from the pharmacy 5 or more days before your surgery and follow the instructions below.

#### Twice each day:

- 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 | Open the tube of mupirocin. Squeeze enough ointment from the tube to coat a cotton swab (about ½ ounce). Put the swab into one nostril and gently move it around the lower part of the nostril in a circular motion. Be sure to touch all surfaces inside the nostril. Do the same thing on other nostril using a clean swab.
- 4 | Gently press the sides of the nose together and massage for 1 full minute so that the ointment is spread throughout the inside of the nostril. Take care not to get the ointment in your eyes.
- 5 | When finished, wash your hands again. Do not blow your nose or put any other products in your nose. Do this twice daily (morning and evening) for 5 days in a row. The final use will be the night before your surgery.



**For use prior to surgery.**

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