



**S**hared  
**H**ealthcare  
**I**ntervention to  
**E**liminate  
**L**ife-threatening  
**D**issemination of MDROs

## Safety and Side Effects

Your hospital will be using nasal iodophor and chlorhexidine gluconate (CHG) products to reduce bacteria that can cause infection. Both products have excellent safety profiles.

Both iodophor and CHG are only used topically, and are not absorbed into the bloodstream during use. In addition, these FDA cleared products have been used in healthcare for a very long time and are considered safe for use in adults. Both are found over-the-counter, and have been used in healthcare for over 60 years.

Most people have no side effects when using iodophor or CHG. However, as with any medication, side effects may occur. With topically applied products like iodophor and CHG, the most common side effects are irritation at the site of application.

### Chlorhexidine Gluconate (CHG)

Millions of patients have used CHG for bathing. It is currently used for:

- Central line and surgical skin prep
- Surgical pre-operative bathing
- Wound cleansing and irrigation
- Daily bathing in intensive care units

## Local Side Effects Are Estimated to Happen in 1-3% of Patients

- Skin irritation
- Rash
- Redness of the skin

## Povidone-Iodine Nasal Swab (Iodophor)

True allergy to iodine (the active ingredient in iodophor) does not exist since iodine is required naturally in our bodies. Although uncommon, other ingredients in the nasal iodine application swab may cause side effects that include:

- Mild discomfort
- Irritation

## Allergic Reactions

In **extremely rare** circumstances, severe allergic reactions to chlorhexidine have been reported. **Such serious reactions are so rare that they only occur in case reports.** However, if you think a patient may be developing a severe allergic reaction (including hives, severe itching, difficulty breathing, tightness in the chest, swelling of the mouth, face, lips, or tongue), stop the decolonization drug and **immediately** call 911. For less severe side effects, please contact the treating physician for all patient care needs.

Similar to all quality improvement programs, any questions regarding issues related to the decolonization products should be directed to the patient's nurses and treating physicians.

