

**HSS**

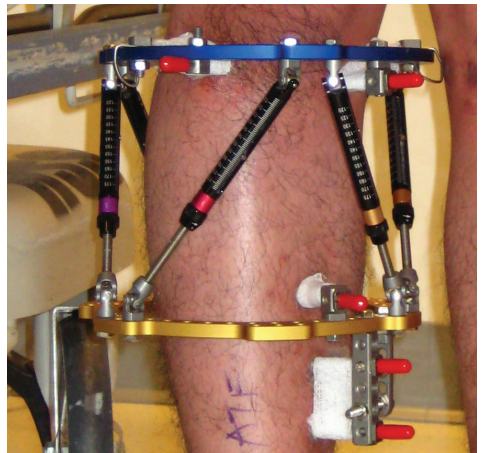
**HOSPITAL FOR  
SPECIAL SURGERY**

## Patient's Guide to **Pin Care**

Limb Lengthening and  
Complex Reconstruction Surgery



Mono-Lateral Frame

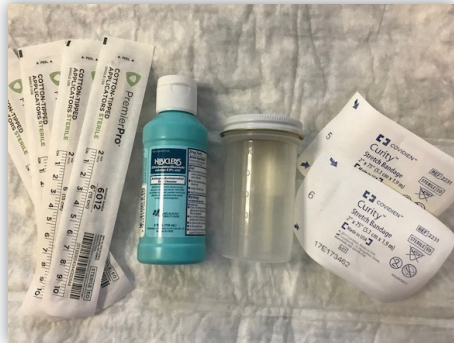


Circular/Ilizarov Frame

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# Why:

Pin care is important in the prevention of infection for circular and monolateral frames.



## Supplies Needed:

- *Gloves*
- *Sterile Cup*
- *Sterile Cotton Swabs*
- *Scissors*
- *Gauze Wrap*
- *Hibiclens (Chlorhexidine)*

# Frequently Asked Questions:

## 1. Can I take a shower?

In most cases, yes. In fact, a daily shower is recommended as part of the proper pin care procedure.

## 2. What kind of soap should I use?

A mild soap should be used to clean the frame and the surrounding area. Allow the water to run on the frame.

## 3. How often should pin care be done?

Once daily pin care should be done immediately following a shower.

## 4. Where do I get the supplies to do my pin care?

The hospital will give you supplies for a couple of days to get you started and a prescription for supplies for the remainder of your pin care. (Insurance may or may not reimburse for supplies.)

## 5. How long do I continue to do my pin care?

Pin care must be done daily until your frame is removed.

## 6. How often should I change the pin care solution?

A new solution should be poured on a daily basis.

# Steps for Pin Care:

(Variations and other interventions are to be made by the Doctor only).

**1** Wash hands and apply gloves.  
Remove gauze dressing.

**2** Shower using a mild soap  
on frame area. Run water on  
frame area.



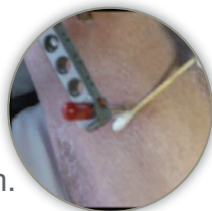
**3** Pour a small amount of  
Hibiclens solution into a  
clean cup.

**4** Place sterile cotton swabs in  
the solution.

**5** Use only 1 cotton swab per pin site.



- 6** Apply cotton swab to pin site with moderate pressure, never leaving the site.



Go around the pin site and then up the pin.

*\*\*\*If contact is lost with the pin site (where the pin enters the skin), use a new cotton swab. Once the cotton swab is drawn up the pin, don't go back down.*

**Do not use the same cotton swab on another pin.**

- 7\*** Wrap pins in groups/clusters with gauze wrap.



**\*Monolateral Frame  
Exception to Step 7**

The gauze should be wrapped around the frame from the upper pins to the lower pins; positioned between the skin and the frame.

## Do:

- Follow the pin care directions exactly, using proper pin care technique.
- Call the doctor's office for a follow-up visit.
- You may go into a chlorinated pool after 4 weeks, **after seeking surgeon's approval.**

***Call your doctor at the first sign of infection (see next page).***

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## Don't:

- You are **NOT** allowed to go into the ocean, pond, hot tub or lake.
- Don't allow animals to lick the frame area.
- Don't use the same cotton swab on more than one pin site.
- Don't use the same cotton swab if contact is lost with the pin site (where the pin enters the skin). Use a new cotton swab.
- Once the cotton swab is drawn up the pin, don't draw it back down to where the pin enters the skin.

# SIGNS OF INFECTION:

- **Increase in pain level**
- **Redness/heat on skin**
- **Drainage** (*some bleeding from the pin site is normal during the first week.*)
- **Fever**
- **Numbness/tingling**

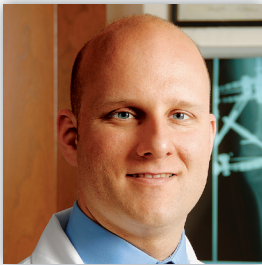
***Contact your doctor immediately if you exhibit any of these signs.***

# Limb Lengthening and Complex Reconstruction Surgery



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