

The Four Levels of Soap

1. SURGICAL SCRUB

Primary Use:	Skin prep prior to surgery; sterilize the skin
Active Ingredient:	Chlorhexidine gluconate, betadine, PCMX
Pros:	Kills the broadest spectrum of microorganisms rapidly
Cons:	Can be very harsh, drying to the skin; medicinal smell; can be expensive
Examples:	Hibiclens, Bactoshield, Betadine Scrub

2. HEALTHCARE PERSONNEL HANDCLEANSER

Primary Use:	Healthcare personnel handwash
Active Ingredient:	PCMX
Pros:	Kills primary microorganisms; considered “broad spectrum”
Cons:	Many brands are harsh, drying to the skin with repeated washings; many have an institutional, medicinal smell
Examples:	Vionex, Vestal Medicated, Derma Cidol 2000

EXCEPTION: AloeGuard[®] - *“Kills the Germs, NOT Your Hands!”*
Smells great too!

3. GENERAL ANTISEPTIC CLEANSER

Primary Use:	Household; anywhere light-duty germ killing is desired
Active Ingredient:	Triclosan, PCMX
Pros:	Readily available
Cons:	Not recommended for healthcare personnel handwashing*; drying to skin; often unpleasant smell, usually expensive
Examples:	Dial, Softsoap Antibacterial, many commercial brands

4. NON-MEDICATED SOAP

Primary Use:	Household; routine handwashing
Active Ingredient:	None
Pros:	Inexpensive; usually gentle on skin
Cons:	Has no germ killing activity other than provided by mechanical (washing) action
Examples:	Derma Scrub, Softsoap, many commercial brands