



*Personal Care,  
Convenience &  
Professional Quality!*

## *Preventing an Infection after Surgery*

### **5. Stop Smoking Now**

Many smokers are sick of being told to quit smoking, and most are also fully aware that smoking is bad for their health. In this case, there is a very good reason that has nothing to do with the possibility of cancer in the future. Smokers are much more likely to have an infection during their recovery from surgery, in fact, some studies have shown that a smoker may be up to six times more likely to end up with an infection than a non-smoker. In addition, smokers also have more scarring and heal more slowly. The more slowly your incision closes, the longer you are at risk for an infection in that area.

### **6. If You Leave the House, Use an Antibacterial Hand Cleanser**

It may seem like hand washing has been covered pretty well already, but when you are out in public it is important to remember that everyone else isn't as diligent as you are. Everything you touch in public has the potential to spread an infection, so use waterless hand sanitizer frequently. Basically, assume that everyone else has failed to wash their hands and you are protecting yourself from their germs.

### **7. Resist the Ointment Urge**

It may be tempting to use ointments and lotions on your incision, but it is not a good idea to use anything on your incision that your physician has not recommended. Many antibacterial ointments will actually keep moisture on your skin and in your incision, which creates an environment that encourages the growth of germs.

### **Sources:**

Preventing Infection. New York City Health and Hospitals. 2008

<http://www.nycgov/html/hhc/irfocus/html/preventinginfections/preventinginfections.html>