**Patient Handout: Chlorohexidine allergy**

Chlorohexidine is a common antiseptic agent with intrinsic antimicrobial properties. It is commonly found in medical devices and antiseptics such as central venous catheters, lubricant gels, Foley catheters, cleaning solutions, mouthwash and many more.

**Chlorohexidine allergy can be fatal**, if exposed to mucosal membranes or the vasculature. The highest risk of reaction to chlorohexidine is in healthcare settings, as many medical products have chlorohexidine. Many healthcare professionals are **NOT** aware of products that contain chlorohexidine, and this can lead to undesired exposures and potential harm.

Whenever you have any invasive procedure such as:

* IV insertion
* Central Venous catheter insertion
* Surgery
* Dental procedures
* Epidural block
* Regional anesthesia procedure

It is imperative that you notify your health care provider, and ensure they understand the severity of your allergy. Emphasize the need for the team to carefully review any antiseptics, gel or device that would come in contact with you. Even if you disclose your chlorohexidine allergy status, the healthcare team might not be aware of all the equipment that contains chlorohexidine.

Lastly, you should purchase an allergy alert bracelet and wear it all times.

If there are any questions, please contact the clinic via email