

## Patient information

# The use of intravenous Lidocaine to treat intractable pain

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Your pain specialist has recommended intravenous Lidocaine to treat your pain. Although IV Lidocaine use in chronic pain is unlicensed, research has shown it to be effective in this condition. Recent evidence suggests that intravenous (IV) Lidocaine, a local anaesthetic, is well tolerated, and in low doses can reduce the abnormal firing of nerves that cause pain. IV Lidocaine is only prescribed for certain kinds of pain which are difficult to manage despite other forms of treatment

**It is most important that you inform the pain clinic if you are:**

- **allergic to local anaesthetics**
- **are pregnant or breast feeding**
- **if you have / or have had, in the past, any heart problems**

## Benefits

In persistent neuropathic pain, reduction of pain may persist for weeks after an infusion.

## Risks

No procedure is risk free; however, intravenous Lidocaine is a relatively safe drug when given in low doses.

Short term and common side effects include: **drowsiness, dizziness, nausea, dry mouth, metallic taste and tingling inside and surrounding the mouth.**

Some of these side effects may last for a week or more with general fatigue affecting up to 25% of patients. Although serious and life-threatening effects are exceedingly

rare for the doses being used for your treatment, they cannot be excluded. Your pain specialist will discuss the side effects with you in more detail prior to you receiving the infusion.

## **The day of treatment**

You will be required to come in for a morning or afternoon appointment. On arrival please hand in your completed health questionnaire.

***Please bring in all your current medication including medication for pain relief.***

You will need to have an ECG recorded if one has not been performed within 14 days of your admission. Bloods will also need to be taken and your weight will be recorded.

Once admitted you will be seen by a pain specialist doctor who will discuss the benefits and side effects of the infusion and you will be asked to sign a consent form.

A small cannula will be placed in a vein (this is usually in the back of your hand or arm) for the lidocaine to be infused through. Recording electrodes will be placed on your skin to allow staff to monitor your heart rhythm during the infusion. Observations such as pulse and blood pressure will be recorded frequently, and you will be asked to report any side effects.

## **Pre-procedure advice regarding eating / drinking**

- **For morning procedures:** Nothing to eat after midnight prior to your treatment (no sweets or chewing gum), water only until 7:00am.
- **For afternoon procedures:** Nothing to eat after 7:00am prior to your treatment (no sweets or chewing gum), water only until 11:00am.

## **Pre-procedure advice regarding diabetes**

- If you are **type 1 insulin controlled** diabetic or type 2 tablet and insulin controlled diabetic, contact your diabetic provider (GP or diabetic nurse) for advice on how to manage your diabetic medication prior to your procedure.
- If you are **type 2 tablet controlled diabetic**, please contact the pain service on 01284 712528 for advice on how to manage your diabetic medication prior to your procedure.

## **Points to remember**

- Please bring your glasses if you need them for reading.

- Continue taking all your regular medication on treatment day.
- If there is any possibility that you may be pregnant, please inform a member of the nursing team.
- **You will need a driver:** Your stay may be between 4 - 6 hours and before any treatment takes place you will be asked to provide assurance that somebody is able to drive you home and that you have a reliable telephone in case you require assistance overnight.

## What to expect afterwards

You will be ready for discharge home or returned to your ward one hour after the infusion has been completed, provided your observations are within the normal range and no side effects are being experienced.

It is recommended you take it easy the day of the procedure and not drive for three hours following completion of the infusion. Normal activities may be resumed the next day, as long as you feel up to it. As previously mentioned you may experience some side effects for a week or more.

A letter will be sent to your GP and you will be sent a questionnaire in a few weeks time to assess the effectiveness of the Lidocaine infusion.

## Additional information

The information in this leaflet is not intended to replace your doctor's advice. If you require more information or have any questions, please speak to your doctor or contact one of the following:

**Pain Clinic Clinical Nurse Specialist**                      01284 712528

**Waiting List Enquiries**    01284 712980

*If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities please visit the website for AccessAble (formerly DisabledGo)*

<https://www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/west-suffolk-nhs-foundation-trust>

