

Patient information

The use of intravenous Magnesium to treat intractable persistent pain

Your pain specialist has recommended intravenous Magnesium to treat your pain. Although unlicensed, research has shown that magnesium may be helpful in a range of pain conditions. IV magnesium is well tolerated and can reduce pain. IV magnesium 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 pregnant or breast feeding
- have / or have had, in the past, any kidney, liver or heart problems
- Myasthenia gravis (muscular weakness)
- are taking digoxin or antibiotics or calcium channel blockers eg amlodipine, nifedipine or verapamil

Benefits

Reduction of persistent pain may occur.

Risks

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

Short term side effects may include:

- drowsiness
- nausea
- vomiting
- confusion

- slurred speech
- double vision
- muscle weakness
- thirst
- skin flushing
- a burning sensation, particularly at back of neck
- pain at IV injection

Although serious and life-threatening side effects are exceedingly rare with 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.

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

You will need to have an ECG (heart tracing) recorded and blood taken if these have not been performed within 14 days of your procedure.

Once admitted you will be seen by a pain specialist 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 magnesium 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 and drinking

- **For morning procedures:** Nothing to eat after midnight prior to your treatment(no sweets or chewing gum), water only until 07:00am.
- **For afternoon procedures:** Nothing to eat after 07:00am (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.
- 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 contact 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 at least three hours following completion of the infusion. Normal activities may be resumed the next day, as long as you feel up to it.

A letter will be sent to your GP and you will be sent a questionnaire in a few weeks time to complete to assess the effectiveness of the magnesium 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 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>



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