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Lidocaine Infusion for the management of pain

The aim of this leaflet is to give you information about Lidocaine Infusion and to answer some questions that you may have. Please note that different places may do things differently. Your doctor will be able to explain fully what to expect.

What is a Lidocaine infusion?

Lidocaine is a local anaesthetic medicine similar to the medicine that Dentists use to numb your gums. It is used to calm nerve related pain which may affect the whole body or just part of it, only when medicines taken by mouth are not helping your pain.

The lidocaine infusion is given directly into a vein. The infusion is continuous and will take about 60 – 75 minutes to complete.

What are the benefits of a Lidocaine infusion?

Lidocaine infusion can be effective in reducing nerve related pain. Occasionally, this procedure is used to help reduce other medications such as morphine. Beneficial effects of the infusion can, potentially, last for weeks to months.

Is this the right treatment for me?

Please note that this is not a definitive cure but can help with managing your pain. Other treatment options will be discussed with you before deciding to have the infusion. The decision on whether or not to have the infusion is made together by your doctor and you. Your doctor will be able to give you up-to-date information about the chance of this treatment working for you and how it fits in with other care. Lidocaine infusion treatment does not always work and may not help your pain. If you are undecided about whether or not to have the infusion then more advice and information can be given. Please speak to your doctor for more information. If your health has changed, it is important to let your doctor know.

- ▶ If you have an infection in your body, your doctor may wait until the infection is cleared before giving the treatment.
- ▶ If you have been started on anticoagulant or antiplatelet medicines that “thin the blood” such as warfarin, heparin, apixaban, rivaroxaban or clopidogrel, extra preparation may be needed before you have the treatment.
- ▶ If you suffer from diabetes.
- ▶ If you have any allergies.
- ▶ If you suffer from epilepsy.

You must also tell the doctor if there is any chance that you could be pregnant.

What will happen to me during the treatment?

Before the treatment, your doctor will discuss the procedure with you. Your doctor will either ask for your consent before the infusion or ask you to confirm that you have already given consent and are still happy to have the infusion. The treatment will take place in a dedicated area with a trained person. This is what usually happens:

- ▶ A medical professional will get you ready for the procedure. Your blood pressure and pulse rate will be checked at regular intervals during the procedure. You will also need to be weighed.
- ▶ You will be asked to lie on a bed/trolley. A small needle (cannula) will be placed in the back of your hand. This will be secured with a small dressing.
- ▶ Your doctor will prepare an infusion. This will be administered to you through the cannula. This will be a mixture of sterile saline solution (salty water) and Lidocaine (the local anaesthetic drug).
- ▶ The infusion will take 60 – 75 minutes to complete.

What will happen to me after the treatment?

After the treatment, you will be taken to a recovery or ward area where nursing staff will check on you. Please be careful when you first get off the trolley; ensure you are steady on your feet. Before you go home, the cannula will be removed and a small dressing applied to the insertion site. This can be removed later in the day at home. You will be given more advice when you are ready to go home.

When will I be able to go home from hospital after my treatment?

You will usually be able to go home within an hour or two after the infusion and in some cases much sooner, depending on how long your doctor or nurse want you to stay. Please make sure that you have someone to collect you after the procedure. It is unsafe for you to drive home straight after the procedure. If you do so your motor insurance will be invalid.

What can I do after my treatment?

Ideally, you should arrange for someone to stay with you for 24 hours but, if you cannot, you should at least have access to a telephone. You should not drive, operate machinery, sign legal documents, provide childcare without help or drink alcohol until fit to do so. If you are not sure, please ask your doctor for more advice.

When can I return to work after the treatment?

This will be different for different people and may depend on the type of work you do. It is difficult to give general advice and so you should discuss this with your doctor.

Will I experience any side-effects?

Lidocaine is a relatively safe drug when given at a carefully calculated dose. But as with any procedure, there may be side effects. However, these are usually minor and there is little risk of serious harm.

Side-effects may include:

- ▶ Mild local tenderness and/or bruising at the cannula site.
- ▶ During the infusion, you may experience signs of local anaesthetic toxicity. You should tell your doctor immediately if you develop tingling around your mouth or a metallic taste, ringing in your ears, feeling drunk, dizzy, blurred vision, muscle twitches or difficulty in breathing.
- ▶ There is a rare possibility that you may have an allergic reaction to the drugs used.
- ▶ In very rare cases the injection can cause seizures or fitting, changes in heart rhythm or blood pressure which would require the procedure to be stopped and emergency medicines to be given.



People vary in how they interpret words and numbers.
This scale is provided to help.



What can I expect in the days afterwards?

Do not worry if your pain feels worse for a few days as this sometimes happens. Take your regular pain killers and medications as normal and this should get better. Try to keep on the move about the house while avoiding anything too difficult.

What should I do in the weeks after the treatment?

As your pain decreases, you should try to gently increase your exercise. It is best to increase your activities slowly. Try not to do too much as you may have more pain the next day. Your doctor can provide more specific advice.

What follow-up will be arranged?

A letter will usually be sent to your GP and your doctor will advise on what to do after the procedure. You may be asked to make a call to the pain department, be given a form to fill in, or given a telephone review or other appointment.

Is there anything else I need to think about before the procedure?

- ▶ Please bring your glasses if you need them for reading.
- ▶ Bring any other devices you may need, such as hearing aids, mobility aids etc.
- ▶ Always bring a list of all current medication.
- ▶ Continue to take your medication as usual on the treatment day.
- ▶ Avoid vaccinations including COVID-19 jabs for 2 weeks on either side of the procedure.

Finally...

The information in this leaflet is not intended to replace your doctor's or health care team's advice. If you need more information or have any questions or concerns, please speak to your GP or contact your Pain Clinic.

After your procedure, if you have any questions or concerns, please contact your GP/Minor Injuries Unit/Accident & Emergency

or

Contact the Chronic Pain Service at **01495-768699** or **01495-765701** (09:00 to 16:00 Monday to Friday)

Adapted from Faculty of Pain Medicine (FPM) Patient Information Leaflet for General Injection Treatment

**This document is available in Welsh/
Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg**