

Lidocaine Intravenous Infusion

Patient Information

Chronic Pain Service



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What is a lidocaine intravenous infusion?

A lidocaine infusion is when local anaesthetic is given by a pump, over approximately 60 minutes, into a vein. It is prescribed to patients who have widespread chronic pain. Although it is not specifically licensed for use in this way it is known to have beneficial results.

How does it work?

It works by decreasing both spontaneous nerve activity and the spread of pain signals in nerve fibres. In other words it quietens the misbehaving nerves, thereby reducing the pain.

What does the infusion involve?

This treatment requires you to attend Ward 3 at Leigh Infirmary for a morning or afternoon session where you will meet your doctor. You will stay on the ward for the whole session. During the infusion you will be monitored using a heart monitor and your blood pressure, pulse and breathing will be recorded regularly throughout the session. You will be allowed home when we are confident you have not suffered any significant side effects.

The treatment works over many days so you will not know how effective it has been on the day. You will be followed up by a pain specialist to assess how beneficial the treatment has been and if you want it repeating.

What are the side effects of a lidocaine infusion?

Fortunately serious side effects or complications are very rare and by being continuously monitored, the chances of problems arising are minimised.

However, even at the recommended dose, side effects can occur. These include dizziness, headaches, drowsiness, tingling or numbness around your mouth, metallic taste, garbled speech, tunnel vision, ringing in your ears or a tremor, a sense of being drunk and nausea. If any of these side effects do occur, they usually disappear once the infusion is slowed down or stopped.

Recognised potential complications of lidocaine infusions include low or high blood pressure, a slow or fast pulse rate, irregular heartbeats, fainting, seizures, or allergic reactions to lidocaine, which, in extremely rare cases, can lead to death.

Benefits

If this treatment helps, then you may find a decrease in pain from severe to a more manageable level. You may be able to decrease the number of painkillers you regularly consume, and you might be able to do more. Unfortunately we cannot guarantee you will benefit from this treatment.

Alternatives

Your pain specialist will have discussed alternatives with you during your consultation. Options might have included different medicines, injections, or physical therapies. However,

as every patient is unique, specific alternatives cannot be given on an information leaflet like this as not all treatments are suitable for everyone.

Is there anything I should or should not do?

- You must not eat or drink for four hours before the procedure.
- It is very important for you to tell us if you have had recent heart, liver or kidney problems, irregular heartbeats, abnormal ECG, seizure disorder or reactions to local anaesthetics. Also, if you are pregnant, it is not recommended that you have this procedure.
- You need to arrange for someone to take you home on the day of your treatment. Do not drive on the day of the procedure. You can usually begin normal activities the following day.
- Take all your medicines as usual.
- Keep your follow up appointment and a pain log over days and weeks following the procedure as this is the only way we will know if your infusion has worked. Your pain specialist will decide on the frequency of the infusions you can receive based on the amount of pain relief that you get
- If you experience no pain relief, don't be discouraged. Talk with the pain team for other alternatives.

Contact information

If you have any questions, please contact the pain management team on telephone 01942 773099.

It is very important that you attend any appointments made for you with either, the Doctor; Nurse; Physiotherapist; Occupational therapist or the Psychologist. If you cannot attend, please cancel the appointment, and re-arrange, failure to cancel will result in discharge from the pain service and you will need to be re-referred by your GP if you wish to be seen again.

Comments, Compliments or Complaints

The Patient Relations/Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Department provides confidential on the spot advice, information and support to patients, relatives, friends, and carers.

Contact Us

Tel: 01942 822376 (Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm)

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Ask 3 Questions

Become more involved in decisions about your healthcare. You may be asked to make choices about your treatment. To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions:

1. What are my options?
2. What are the pros and cons of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?



How We Use Your Information

For details on how we collect, use, and store the information we hold about you, please see patient information leaflet, Ref. **Corp 006** How we use your information, this can be found on the Patient Information Leaflets page on the Trust website, see details on the front cover.

This leaflet is also available in audio, large print, Braille, and other languages upon request. For more information, please ask in the department/ward.

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