

Magnesium Infusions

Q1 What is the Purpose of the Magnesium infusion?

Nerve pain can occur due to many causes including direct injury, diabetes, after amputation or following shingles. This can cause burning; shooting pain that is difficult to treat. Magnesium is a NMDA receptor antagonist and works in part by blocking the ion channel in the NMDA receptor complex, preventing receptor activation, signal amplification and central sensitization as seen in nerve pain.

Q2 Who should not have a magnesium infusion?

Patients with severe heart failure, atrioventricular conduction blocks, serum creatinine excess 110mmol/L and severe liver disease. Your doctor will do an ECG and blood tests before the infusion.

Q3 How is the Infusion Performed?

A magnesium solution is infused via a pump connected to fine tubing attached to a needle that is usually inserted into your forearm.

Q4 How long does the Block Take?

Short infusions can be performed as an outpatient and take about 90 minutes. Magnesium is often co-administered daily during 8 hour and multiday ketamine infusions for neuropathic pain.

Q5 Will the injection hurt?

There is some short lived pain while inserting the small needle. During the infusion patients often report feeling very hot inside, feeling as if they have wet themselves (although they haven't) and sometimes a mild burning in the forearm with the infusion that can be reduced by the addition of some lignocaine.

Q6 What happens during the infusion?

During the infusion you sit quietly, read watch TV or talk to a friend. Your pulse and your blood pressure will be checked at regular intervals.

Q7 What happens after the procedure?

After the infusion you will be given a drink and the nurse will get you up for a short walk. After this you will be ready for discharge. In some cases the Physiotherapist will instruct you on appropriate exercises that you can continue after discharge.

Q8 What Should I do After the Procedure?

It is essential that you have someone to take you home and stay with you for the first night and that you DO NOT undertake strenuous exercise / activity until the next day. Nonetheless, you should be able to resume normal activity, and return to work within 24 hours.

Q9 Will the Injection Cure My Pain?

One injection is unlikely to cure your pain but will guide further treatment. We hope the effect on the nerves continues after the infusion is stopped and may last for a few hours, days, weeks, months or longer. Sometime a series of infusions may be required to treat your pain. It is difficult to predict how many are needed for each person. Regardless of how many injections are required, it is important to use active self-management strategies and continue regular exercise, as prescribed by your doctor, between infusions.

Q10 What are the Risks and Side effects of this Procedure?

All Medical procedures are associated with risks. The most common symptom of this procedure is side effects to the drug. These include: infusion related arm pain, low blood pressure, facial and generalised flushing, feeling hot, blurred vision, nasal stuffiness, nausea and vomiting.

Q11 When will I see the Doctor next?

Please arrange a review in 1-2 weeks or after the series of blocks have been scheduled. Please advise ASAP if you are unable to keep your scheduled appointment.