

LIGNOCAINE INFUSION

- Q1 What is the Purpose of the lignocaine 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. The circulating local anaesthetic reduces the activity of the damaged nerves and may reduce the pain
- Q2 What is a Lignocaine infusion?** The treatment involves infusing the local anaesthetic lignocaine into a vein that is usually inserted in the back of the hand.
- Q3 How is the Infusion Performed?** Your Doctor will order an ECG and some blood tests in the days before the infusion to check your heart. 2 hour infusions are performed in the recovery room; multiday infusions are usually performed in a monitored bed in the high dependency unit. The infusion is attached to the needle using a piece of tubing attached to a pump.
- Q4 How long does the Block Take?** From admission to discharge the short treatment takes 3-4 hours, with the infusion running for 2 hours. The multiday lignocaine infusion for neuropathic pain or headaches is usually run for 7 days.
- Q5 Will the injection hurt?** The only discomfort will be the small needle being inserted in the hand.
- Q6 What happens during the infusion?** During the infusion you will have your heart rate monitored and the nurse will take your blood pressure at regular intervals. Some people experience some side effects such as tingling around the lips, these should be reported immediately to your nurse.
- 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 at least guide further treatment. After any injection the local anaesthetic will wear off, but the effect this has on the nerves may continue. As a result any reduction in your pain levels may last for a few hours, days, weeks, months or considerably longer. Therefore, a series of infusions may be required to treat this type of pain. It is difficult to predict how many are needed for each person. Regardless of how many injections are required, it is important to continue regular exercise, as prescribed by your doctor, in 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: tingling around the lips, twitching, fitting and abnormal heart rhythms. These are very rare and would be identified and treated while in hospital which may delay your discharge.
- 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.