



Patient Information Sheet

Iron Infusion

Introduction

This leaflet offers you guidance and potential risks and benefits if you are having or considering an intravenous (IV) iron infusion.

Why do I need an IV iron infusion

- This will help improve the body's iron levels quicker than an oral (by mouth) tablet or a change in diet.
- The body needs iron to make haemoglobin (Hb), a protein that is found in red blood cells.
- Haemoglobin carries oxygen from the lungs to the rest of the body and helps muscles store and use oxygen.
- You can feel tired if your iron levels are low which may result in normal daily routines becoming more difficult due to the tiredness. When the body gets too low in iron, the haemoglobin levels fall below normal and this is known as 'iron deficiency anaemia'.
- An iron infusion is usually given directly into the vein via a cannula to treat iron deficiency when oral iron medication is not working effectively or there is a need to quickly increase iron and haemoglobin in the body.

Please report any discomfort during the infusion to the person looking after you.

Side effects

Whilst IV iron infusions are considered safe, there can be side effects. These include:

Hypersensitivity. This is uncommon affecting 1 in 100 people.

Anaphylaxis (allergic reaction). This is rare affecting 1 in 1000.

Injection site reactions. These are considered more common and affect 10 out of 100 people. It includes redness, swelling, burning, pain, bruising, discolouration and/or irritation at the site of cannulation and infusion.

Nausea is common affecting 10 out 100 people.



Delayed reactions. Some patients may have a severe delayed reaction. This includes joint pain, muscle pain and sometimes fever. This can vary from several hours up to 4 days after administration. Symptoms usually last 2 to 4 days and settle spontaneously (without noticing). Pain killers such as paracetamol can be used.

Permanent skin staining This is rare.

How long does an iron infusion take?

- An iron infusion takes from 30 minutes to 1 hour. This will depend on the amount of iron needed.
- Intravenous iron is given by a registered PreAMS nurse or theatre practitioner.
- You will be monitored for any adverse effects whilst the treatment is given and also for 30 minutes after the treatment.
- Sometimes the iron infusion can be given in a different form and so this may take longer and you may need to stay for a few hours.
- Depending on the amount of iron required, it may be necessary for you to receive a second infusion.

After the infusion

You may need to continue taking an oral iron supplement after the IV iron infusion. You should only start to take it 5 days after your iron infusion.

Contact details

If you have any questions, please ask the PreAMS team who will be happy to discuss any queries you have.

PreAMS, Royal Stoke Hospital

Sunday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm

Tel: **01782 676561**

PreAMS, County Hospital

Monday to Saturday 8.00am to 6.00pm

Tel: **01785 236197**

Out of hours, telephone your GP or call 111 for advice

In the event of an **emergency**, please **call 999** or visit your nearest A&E department