

Patient information

Iron Infusion

Digestive Diseases Care Group

Your clinician has advised you to have an iron infusion

What is an iron infusion?

Iron infusion is a treatment for patients who have low iron stores in the body. Low iron stores (iron deficiency) can result in a reduction in the number of red blood cells circulating around the body (anaemia). This is called Iron Deficiency Anaemia (IDA).

What are the benefits of having an iron infusion?

A common symptom of IDA is tiredness with patients reporting feeling exhausted, lethargic and weak. Other symptoms include shortness of breath, irregular heartbeats, headaches and dizziness. Ideally, the symptoms experienced due to IDA will start to resolve as the amount of iron in the blood increases. This can take several weeks as the iron infusion helps to build a person's iron stores back up and the anaemia resolves.

The aim of iron infusion:

An iron infusion is a way to increase the body's iron levels quickly. It is a more immediate treatment than oral supplements or dietary changes.

What are the risks of having an iron infusion?

As with all medicines iron infusion can cause side effects, although not everyone gets them. Common side effects include headache, nausea, high blood pressure, soreness or redness around the injection site.

There is a low risk with all iron treatments given directly into your vein. You may experience a reaction known as an anaphylactic reaction. This can cause symptoms such as swelling of the face, tongue and mouth. It may also cause difficulty in breathing. The nurse who is treating you will monitor you for signs of anaphylaxis and will provide emergency treatment if required. It is important to remember that with the iron infusion used in this Trust anaphylactic reaction is rare.

Are there any alternative treatments available?

You may try oral iron supplements as an alternative, however, for a person with iron deficiency who cannot take or does not respond to iron supplements, iron infusions are one option for increasing their iron levels.

If you are worried about any of these risks, please speak to your Consultant or a member of their team.

What will happen if I decide not to have treatment?

If you decide not to have treatment and you are not taking any iron tablets, your anaemia may not improve. This might mean that your symptoms may get worse.

Getting ready for your iron infusion:

Your iron infusion will take place on the medical day unit at Broadgreen Hospital. For the privacy of other patients having treatment at the same time we would advise that if you have a relative or friend who attends with you, they will not be allowed to stay on the day ward during your infusion.

Please leave all cash and valuables at home. If you need to bring valuables into hospital, these can be sent to General Office for safekeeping. General Office is open between 08.30 am and 4.30 pm Monday to Friday. Therefore, if you are discharged outside these times we will not be able to return your property until General Office is open. The Trust does not accept responsibility for items not handed in for safekeeping.

The day of your iron infusion:

Your iron infusion will be given, through a drip, directly into a vein. The infusion is given over 15 minutes and you will be observed for any side effects for a further 30 minutes after completion of treatment. A nurse will monitor your blood pressure and pulse rate throughout your infusion. Please tell the nurse if you feel unwell or think that you may be experiencing any side effects whilst you are treated.

Going Home

After your infusion your cannula will be removed, you will be offered something to eat and drink and will then be able to go home. You may only need a single dose of iron infusion or you may need to return for further treatments to complete your course. If a second treatment is required you will be given an appointment for this before you leave the day ward.

Discharge Information

The nurse who administered your infusion will provide you with any aftercare information that is required.

Pain relief and medication

You shouldn't experience any pain after your iron infusion and you can continue to take any medication as normal.

Feedback

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

Further information

The reason for iron infusion will have been discussed with you by the referring clinician but if you require further information please contact 5Y day ward Tel: 0151 706 2491
Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 2491

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All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

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