

Lidocaine plaster

This leaflet is for patients being prescribed a lidocaine plaster to reduce pain.

What is a lidocaine plaster?

A lidocaine plaster belongs to a class of medications called local anaesthetics, that work by reducing the pain on your skin. The plasters come in strengths of either 5% or 700mg, depending on the brand dispensed. They are of equivalent strength and can be used interchangeably.

It can be used alongside other medications and treatments you are currently using.

The plaster should be removed after 12 hours so that you have a 12-hour period with no plaster.

What do I need to know before using lidocaine plaster?

- Do not use a lidocaine plaster if you are allergic to lidocaine.
- Inform your doctor if you are pregnant, trying to get pregnant or are breastfeeding.
- Up to a maximum of 3 lidocaine plasters can be used in one application.
- Do not place a lidocaine plaster over injured skin or on open wounds.
- Do not use a lidocaine plaster near your eyes or mouth.
- The lidocaine plaster should be placed directly over the painful area.

Are there any risks?

Lidocaine plasters are used topically (on the skin), which minimises the risk of a toxic reaction to lidocaine. Evidence shows that only a small amount of lidocaine is absorbed systemically (in the blood system).

Local blistering, bruising, burning, discoloration, itching, redness, or swelling at the application site can occur. If blistering does occur, please contact your GP. Skin injury is very uncommon with 1 out of 100 patients reporting this. More severe adverse reactions are very rare.

How to apply a lidocaine plaster:

- The skin should be clean, dry and unbroken.
- If the lidocaine plaster needs to be cut to fit a smaller area, cut before the liner is removed.
- The lidocaine plaster should be placed directly over the painful area.
- Press the lidocaine plaster on the skin for 10 seconds to ensure it sticks firmly.

The lidocaine plaster should remain in place for 12 hours only, either at night, or during the day, with a 12-hour break between applying a new plaster.

Bath, shower and swimming

The lidocaine plaster is a topical (on the skin) plaster so contact with water should be avoided. Bathing, showering and swimming should be done during the periods when you are not wearing the plaster. If you have just had a bath or shower, please wait until the skin has cooled and is dry before putting the plaster on.

Effects on driving and operating heavy machinery

The plaster is unlikely to affect your ability to drive or use heavy machinery so you should be able to do these while using a lidocaine plaster.

What should I do if the plaster falls off or I forget to take it off?

In the unlikely event that the plaster falls off or comes unstuck, you can attempt to replace it on the same area. If it does not stay in place, use a new plaster and remove when you would normally remove your patch. If you forget to take the plaster off, remove once you have remembered and wait 12 hours before applying a new plaster.

If you forget to put on the plaster, apply straight away and leave on for 12 hours.

Removal of the lidocaine plaster

When removing the plaster, remove it slowly. If it does not come off easily, soak it with warm water for a few minutes before removing it.

Fold the plaster in half with the sticky sides together and throw away.

Keep out of reach of children and do not flush down the toilet.

If no relief from the lidocaine plaster is noted after 2-4 weeks, stop using the medication.

Any queries?

If you have any concerns regarding this treatment, please contact:

Pain Management Unit 0118 322 8261 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm).

Out of hours/weekends: please contact your GP or the out of hours service for advice.

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

Pain Management Unit, January 2023

Next review due: January 2025