

# Intravenous (IV) iron infusion

## Patient information leaflet

**If you need this leaflet in a different language or accessible format  
please speak to a member of staff who can arrange it for you.**

اگر به این بروشور به زبان دیگر یا در قالب دسترس پذیر نیاز دارید،  
لطفاً با یکی از کارکنان صحبت کنید تا آن را برای شما تهیه کند.

Jeśli niniejsza ulotka ma być dostępna w innym języku lub formacie,  
proszę skontaktować się z członkiem personelu, który ją dla Państwa przygotowuje.

Dacă aveți nevoie de această broșură într-o altă limbă sau într-un format accesibil,  
vă rog să discutați cu un membru al personalului să se ocupe  
de acest lucru pentru dumneavoastră

如果您需要本传单的其他语言版本或无障碍格式，请联系工作人员为您安排。

إذا احتجت إلى هذه النشرة بلغة أخرى، أو بتنسيق  
يسهل الوصول إليه، يرجى التحدث إلى أحد الموظفين لترتيب ذلك لك.

## Why am I having an iron infusion?

Your blood test results show that the amount of iron in your blood is low. Iron is needed for blood to carry oxygen around the body; low levels of iron can make you feel tired, breathless, lethargic and have palpitations. These symptoms are collectively referred to as Iron Deficiency Anaemia (IDA). Normally, iron is replaced with a tablet or a liquid, and this is usually tried first. Iron infusions are offered when there is a need to rapidly correct low iron or for patients in whom iron tablets have been ineffective.

## What is an iron infusion?

An iron infusion is iron delivered intravenously via a drip and pump which takes between 30-60 minutes. You will be observed 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 experience any side effects during treatment. An iron infusion should be painless apart from a sharp scratch when the needle is inserted; if you experience pain during the infusion, let your nurse know immediately.

## What are the benefits of having an iron infusion?

Iron infusions correct the low level of iron in your blood, faster than iron tablets or liquid. You may start to feel less breathless, less tired and more energetic quicker than if you were to have iron tablets or liquid.

## What are the risks?

Common side effects include reactions at the injection site such as redness, swelling, burning, pain, bruising, discolouration and/or irritation. Other common side effects include nausea, headache, diarrhoea or constipation, dizziness, muscle or joint pain, flu-like symptoms and changes in blood pressure and pulse.

On rare occasions skin staining (leakage of iron into tissue) can occur from an iron infusion. This can be significant and permanent. To avoid and/or minimise this risk, please inform nursing staff if you experience any pain or irritation throughout the infusion.

There is a low risk of a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis). This can cause symptoms such as swelling of the face, mouth and tongue, and can cause difficulties breathing. The nurse looking after you will monitor for signs of anaphylaxis and administer emergency treatment if necessary.

## Are there any alternatives?

Normally if your doctor is suggesting an iron infusion, it is because other options have failed. You can try iron tablets or liquid as a supplement or make changes to your diet to improve your iron levels.

### Do I need to take iron tablets or liquid?

Stop taking any iron tablets or liquid the day before your iron infusion. You do not normally need to take iron tablets or liquid following an iron infusion, but if your doctor advises you to restart your iron tablets or liquid you should continue taking them.

### Can I breastfeed following IV iron?

Yes – human studies suggest that the drug does not pass into the breastmilk in significant amounts and is not harmful to the baby.

### Are there any risks to having IV iron while pregnant?

There is a risk of slowing the heart rate of the unborn child (foetal bradycardia). IV iron is avoided in the first trimester as a severe reaction will affect critical stages of the unborn child's development. If you have been considered for IV iron, it will be because the doctor considers the risk of not treating your low iron to be higher than the risk of IV iron.

### What happens after treatment?

A new blood sample will usually be taken some weeks or months following your treatment to determine if your body's iron levels have recovered adequately. A decision will be made at that point to determine if you need further iron infusions.

#### Patient Consent for Intravenous Iron

I confirm I have read the information presented to me in this information leaflet and acknowledge the potential risks involved with intravenous iron infusion. I consent to treatment with intravenous iron.

**Patient signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Patient name:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Important telephone numbers

- Haematology Whiston and St Helens: Ward 2A Day Unit: 0151 676 5206 or contact Lilac day unit: 01744 649 6166 or 6170.
- Haematology Southport and Ormskirk: Medical Day Unit (Southport and Ormskirk): 01704 704 221.
- Maternity Whiston and St Helens: Antenatal Clinic: 0151 430 1493.
- Maternity Southport and Ormskirk: Antenatal Clinic 01695 656 353.
- Surgical Whiston and St Helens: Pre-operative Assessment Clinic: 01744 646 395.
- Surgical Southport and Ormskirk: Pre-operative Assessment Clinic: 01695 656 745.
- Medical Whiston and St Helens: 1B GP Assessment Unit: 0151 430 1752.
- Medical Southport and Ormskirk: Ward 9B AMU 01704 704 244.
- Gastroenterology Whiston and St Helens: Whiston Clinic: 0151 478 7522 or St Helens: 01744 646 223.
- Gastroenterology Southport and Ormskirk: Southport: 01704 704 448 or Ormskirk 01695 656 6459.

Please ask a member of staff if you would like a chaperone present during your procedure.

There may be students and observers present during your consultation as part of their ongoing training. Please let the staff know if you do not wish any students to be present during your attendance.

St Helens Hospital  
Marshall's Cross Road,  
St Helens, Merseyside, WA9 3DA  
Telephone: 01744 26633

Whiston Hospital  
Warrington Road,  
Prescot, Merseyside, L35 5DR  
Telephone: 0151 426 1600

Ormskirk Hospital  
Dicconson Way, Wigan Road,  
Ormskirk, Lancashire, L39 2AZ  
Telephone: 01695 577 111

Southport Hospital  
Town Lane, Kew, Southport,  
Merseyside, PR8 6PN  
Telephone: 01704 547 471