



If you require an interpreter, please let the staff know or phone Interpreter Service on 9605 3056. Services are provided free of charge. Ask staff if this information is available in your preferred language.



You have been referred by your Doctor for an Iron Infusion. Please read carefully and ensure you understand the following information. If you have any question/concern, please ask your nurse before the procedure.

Iron (Ferric Carboxymaltose) infusion, brand name *FERINJECT®, is a product that is used in which iron is delivered to your body intravenously, that is into a vein through a needle. It is only performed by trained medical and nursing staff.

Iron is essential for the body to make the red blood cells in your body which is called haemoglobin (Hb). When the iron levels in your body fall below the normal level this is known as iron deficiency anaemia. Haemoglobin is very important as it carries oxygen from the lungs to the rest of the body. If your haemoglobin or iron levels are low this may make you feel tired and not able to carry out your normal routine.

Before you have your iron infusion, let staff know if:

- you have had an allergic reaction to Iron infusion (*FERINJECT®) in the past
- you have an infection, asthma, eczema, liver disorder or haemochromatosis (too much iron)
- you are pregnant or breastfeeding

Possible side effects:

This is a safe, routine procedure. However, as with all procedures there may be side effects which may possibly happen and we want you to be informed of these side effects.

- **Common side effects (these are usually mild and often relieved with simple pain relief such as paracetamol)**
Headache; dizziness; high blood pressure (hypertension); flushing; nausea; low blood phosphate levels.
- **Uncommon side effects (sometimes one or more of the following side effects occur)**
Temporary numbness; tingling and prickling; sensitivity to touch (hypersensitivity, paraesthesia); increase in heart rate (tachycardia); low blood pressure (hypotension); difficulty breathing; taste disturbance; vomiting; indigestion; flatulence; abdominal pain; constipation; diarrhoea; itchiness; hives (urticaria); redness (erythema); rash; chest pain; accumulation of fluid in the periphery; pain and chills; flu-like symptoms can occur a few days after the infusion has occurred (muscle pain, muscle spasm, back pain, joint pain, pain in extremity, fever, fatigue); long-lasting brown discoloration of the skin may occur due to leakage of the drug where the needle is inserted (at the injection site).
- **Rare side effects**
Anaphylactoid reaction such as rash, difficulty breathing (bronchospasm); swelling of the mouth, lips and tongue (orolingual angioedema); shivering or shaking (rigors); feeling generally unwell (malaise).

Skin staining:

If the iron solution leaks outside the vein (extravasation), this could cause staining of the skin. This staining can range from mild to extensive and may also be uncomfortable. This stain can take months or years to fade, or in some cases may be permanent.



Figure 1.

Example of extent of iron stain (where the skin colour has changed to brown)

Preparing for your iron infusion:

A nursing or medical member of our team will insert an intravenous cannula (needle) into a vein in your arm or hand. If this clinician has difficulty with inserting the cannula, they will NOT attempt the cannulation more than once in each arm. This is to try to avoid the uncommon side effect of iron extravasation, or leakage, which can result in skin staining. In the unlikely event that the clinician indicates they will attempt a third cannulation, please remind them that this is not something in Eastern Health protocol and that you would like to be re-booked. This way you are taking part in the planning and provision of the best possible care for you. Two failed attempts means we will re-book you for the following week to have your cannula inserted under ultrasound guidance via our Medical Imaging department.

During your iron infusion:

You will have a needle (cannula) placed into a vein (arm or hand), the iron mixed with saline will drip (infuse) through this needle over 30 minutes.

To minimise the chance of staining while you are having the infusion in your arm:

- Keep your arm straight and still
- Do not hold anything with the arm (such as phones, tablets, books)
- Do not write with this arm
- Notify staff immediately if you have any pain or swelling in the arm. If you do, we must stop the infusion immediately

Please let staff know **immediately** if you experience:

- Difficulty breathing
- Swelling of the lips, tongue or face
- Development of a new rash
- Pain or swelling at the infusion site or in the same arm

After your Iron infusion:

You will need to be observed for 30 **minutes** after your infusion in case you have a late reaction.

If you have any worries or concerns after your infusion, please call:

Name of Ward or Clinic: _____ Phone Number: _____

*FERINJECT® Consumer Medicine Information <https://www.nps.org.au/medical-info/medicine-finder/ferinject-solution-for-injection> accessed 11/02/2019

Protecting Your Privacy

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Eastern Health is accredited by the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards.

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