



For the Patient: Lidocaine Infusion For Pain

Other names: SCPAINLI

USES

Your doctor has prescribed lidocaine to treat your pain. Lidocaine is a local anesthetic similar to what dentists use to numb your teeth when you get a filling. This medication can be extremely effective at reducing certain kinds of pain. It seems to work to quiet some nerves that are firing when they should not, thereby reducing your pain. It is in an entirely different family of pain medicines than morphine.

HOW LONG DOES PAIN RELIEF LAST?

Pain relief may last from hours to months. It is hoped that at least three weeks of pain relief are achieved. If there is good but only short-term relief, then a similar medicine may be given by mouth.

HOW IS IT GIVEN?

An intravenous (IV) is started in your arm and the medicine is mixed with a salt solution. It is given over about an hour to two hours. Your blood pressure and pulse are measured often. After the infusion is finished, you will stay for another half hour to make sure you have no side effects. The whole procedure will take about 1 ½ to 2 ½ hours. It is **important** that you have someone available to drive you home after the procedure.

IS IT SAFE?

This is a safe drug, if given in appropriate doses. However, even in low doses, certain side effects can occur. Many patients will have slight ringing in the ears, a metallic taste in the mouth, or some lightheadedness. Your doctor and nurse will look for drowsiness, trouble in focusing, slurred speech, numbness of lips and tongue, tingling or heaviness of arms and legs, as well as blood pressure or pulse changes. These side effects mean that the medicine should be slowed down or stopped. When given in this carefully controlled way, the treatment has been shown to be safe. The side effects usually go away quickly once the medicine is stopped or slowed down.

Serious side effects are very rare. These effects include an allergic reaction where you might have sudden, severe difficulty in breathing. There may also be an increased chance of having an irregular heartbeat or convulsions, which can lead to death suddenly.