

Intravenous (IV) iron therapy

Information for patients receiving Monofer® or Ferinject®

This leaflet answers common questions about having intravenous (IV) iron therapy. If you would like further information, or have any particular worries, please do not hesitate to ask your nurse or doctor.

What is iron?

Iron is an essential nutrient for your body. It is an important part of haemoglobin (Hb), the red pigment which gives blood its colour and which carries oxygen around your body.

Why do I need iron injections?

Your blood results have shown that the amount of iron you have in your blood is low. You need iron so your body can make new haemoglobin and red blood cells to carry the oxygen your body requires. Therefore, it is very important to have enough iron in your blood.

What are the likely benefits of iron injections?

Your blood iron level will increase and this may result in your haemoglobin increasing as well. You may notice that you are less tired, have more energy, better concentration and become less breathless when exercising.

Before you receive iron injections

Please stop taking your iron tablets the day before coming to your first appointment. Please tell your doctor if:

- You have ever had severe asthma, eczema or other atopic allergy.
- You have ever had systemic lupus, erythematosus, rheumatoid arthritis or any other immune or inflammatory condition.

You should not receive iron injections if:

- You are known to be sensitive (allergic) to any iron preparations intended for intramuscular (given in a muscle) or intravenous (given via a vein) administration.
- You are known to have damage to your liver.
- You have any acute or chronic infections.

How will the iron be administered?

A small needle will be placed in a vein in your hand or arm. The iron will be given through a pump which takes from 15 minutes up to 4 hours depending in the sort of iron. Your doctor will confirm which iron preparation you will receive and how long this will take.

What happens after the infusion?

We will keep an eye on you for 30 minutes after the infusion to ensure that you have not had any acute hypersensitive (allergic-like) reaction to the iron injection.

If you feel well after this, you will be allowed to go home.

How often will I need to have an infusion?

Usually only twice, where the second final infusion is normally a week later. You will then be seen in an out-patient clinic about one month later. A week before this next appointment you will need to have a blood sample taken. This allows the doctor to review the results before you visit to see whether or not you require more iron and if so, the dose required. If your blood test results are within range, the iron infusions will stop. You may need more iron to maintain the levels expected or you will be discharged. You will continue to have the iron infusions until your blood test levels come into target range.

More information

For more information about the haematology service at the Royal Free London, please visit our website: www.royalfree.nhs.uk//services/services-a-z/haematology

Your feedback

If you have any feedback on this leaflet or for a list of references for it, please email: rf.communications@nhs.net

Alternative formats

This leaflet is also available in large print. If you need this leaflet in another format – for example Braille, a language other than English or audio – please speak to a member of staff.

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