

Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology

Ferinject[®]

Information for patients, relatives and carers

Introduction

You have been given this leaflet because a recent blood test showed you have low iron levels. We recommend that you have an injection of Ferinject[®] to increase your iron levels.

What is Ferinject[®]?

- it is a medicine that contains iron and is given to you via a drip into your vein
- it is not a blood product
- it does not have the risks of blood (although is not risk free, see below)
- it can be used instead of blood in cases where there is no ongoing bleeding, and you are otherwise well

Why have I been advised to have Ferinject[®]?

- your blood tests show you do not have enough iron in your red blood cells.
- oral iron tablets have not worked, or you are unable to take them because of severe side effects
- you asked for alternative treatment when we advised a blood transfusion

When is Ferinject[®] not suitable?

- when you have been told you have 'iron overload' or have severe liver problems
- when you've had a serious allergic reaction to other injectable iron preparations
- if you have anaemia not caused by iron deficiency
- if you are allergic (hypersensitive) to ingredients in Ferinject
- Ferinject[®] is not usually given in the first 3 months of pregnancy

Side effects of Ferinject®

Common (less than 1 in 10)	Uncommon (less than 1 in 100)	Rare (less than 1 in 1000)
headache	change in taste sensation	general feeling of discomfort
dizziness	upset stomach	anxiety, faint, wheeze
high blood pressure	flushing, fast heart rate, low blood pressure	excessive wind (flatulence)
nausea	muscle and joint pains, backache and muscle cramps	rapid swelling of face, mouth, tongue or throat which may cause difficulty in breathing
injection site reaction	tiredness, chills, chest pain, swelling, pins and needles	flu-like illness
extravasation (skin staining)	itching and a rash	
	extravasation – permanent skin staining on arm	

You can safely breastfeed because very little Ferinject® crosses into the breast milk.

Skin discolouration (extravasation)

In some cases, there is a risk of the iron leaking outside the vein. This is called extravasation. This could lead to long-lasting brown staining of the skin and possible irritation at the site of administration. The time it takes for the staining to go away depends on how much of the drug leaks. Sometimes the staining may be permanent. If you notice any discolouration or pain during infusion, let the nurse, doctor or midwife know immediately. The infusion can be stopped, and you can be assessed.

How is Ferinject® given?

Ferinject® is given in the hospital.

Before starting the treatment, the health professional will place an arm band calf and a small probe on your finger. This will check your heart rate, blood pressure, oxygen saturation level, breathing and temperature.

A thin tube (drip) will be put into your vein (with the use of a cannula needle) and the Ferinject® infusion will be given through an infusion pump. The health professional will reassess you after the drip has finished. If you are pregnant, the midwife will listen to your baby's heartbeat. The

midwife will observe your response to the Ferinject® before allowing you to go home. The treatment does not affect your ability to drive.

After the Ferinject® treatment

You might feel a little tired the next day. Your urine may also have a darker colour.

Your symptoms of low iron levels are likely to get better within a few days. So, you should feel less tired and dizzy and be less short of breath.

If you have any questions after reading this information, please let your midwife or doctor know.

How do I make a comment about my visit?

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer any of the questions you may have. If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3312 7777** (10.00 – 16.00, Monday to Friday). You can also email PALS at imperial.pals@nhs.net The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:

Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street
London W2 1NY

Email: ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net

Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team:

imperial.communications@nhs.net

Wi-fi

Wi-fi is available at our Trust. For more information visit our website: www.imperial.nhs.uk