

# Iron infusion

## Why is iron important?

Iron is essential for the body to make haemoglobin (Hb), a pigment that makes red blood cells red. When the amount of iron in the body gets too low, the haemoglobin level falls below normal. This is known as 'iron deficiency anaemia'. Haemoglobin is very important as it carries oxygen from the lungs to the rest of the body.

## Reasons for an iron infusion

The common reasons for admission for an Iron infusion include:

- Iron supplement for severe iron deficiency anaemia, where oral or intramuscular administration is ineffective or inappropriate
- For supplementing iron stores in patients on erythropoietin for anaemia associated with chronic renal failure

## The infusion process

The iron infusion will run for approximately half an hour. This will vary depending on the individual and treatment process.

1. On arrival to the ward, a nurse will complete the admission paperwork. This will include taking a weight and a set of vital signs.
2. Numbing cream will be applied to the back of your child's hands and an IV drip will then be inserted
3. A nurse will frequently monitor your child's vital signs throughout the infusion
4. Once the infusion is complete a nurse will flush the IV with normal saline and remove the IV cannula

## Side effects

There are a number of side effects, ranging from mild to severe which can occur during or up to two days following an Iron infusion.

- Flu-like symptoms
- Face flushing

- Sweating
- Chills, fever 38.5°C or higher
- Headache
- Joint and muscle pains
- Rash
- Dizziness, chest pain
- There is a small uncommon risk of long-lasting brown discolouration of the skin which can occur due to leakage of the iron at the injection site

Please contact your nurse or doctor if your child suffers any of the above.

## If hospitalised

### Admission

The admission process is an opportunity to discuss your child's hospital stay and any special needs they may have while in hospital or for going home.

### Visiting hours

The Cabrini Paediatric Ward does not have set visiting hours.

### Discharge

Your child will be discharged when your doctor is happy with their progress and condition and you are confident with caring for them at home.

Please report to the reception desk in the foyer of the hospital before leaving to finalise any administrative paperwork.

## Questions

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact the Ward using the phone number below.