

# **Patient Information leaflet Ferinject Iron infusion**

## **An information leaflet for patients who have been advised that they need intravenous iron (Ferric Carboxymatose Ferinject)**

### **What is Ferinject**

**Ferinject is an iron preparation that is used to treat iron deficiency anaemia; this is given in a drip straight into the vein.**

**It has been suggested that this should be given as an alternative to the iron tablets or syrup. This is because they are not working or may be causing side effects. Some patients are given intravenous iron as it is important for the iron levels to improve quickly.**

### **Why do we give it?**

**If left untreated iron deficiency anaemia can make you feel tired. You may become increasingly short of breath and cause your heart to beat very fast. You may feel beating in your chest known as palpitations. If left untreated anaemia can increase the risk of requiring a blood transfusion.**

### **When do we give it?**

**Ferinject is usually given when your haemoglobin and ferritin (iron stores) are low. You have tried oral iron tablets / syrups but are intolerant or not responding and your blood levels have not improved.**

### **Are there any risks?**

**Ferinject is usually very safe but with all medications there can be side effects.**

**Potential mild side effects can occur in up to 10 % of patients. (1 in 10 patients). These can include headaches, dizziness, raising or lowering the blood pressure and most commonly nausea.**

**Less than 1% of patient's can experience vomiting, fainting, tingling or numbness of the limbs, abdominal discomfort, constipation, diarrhoea, shortness of breath, muscular and joint pains, fever, rashes, skin flushes, swelling of the hands and feet and very rarely a significant allergic reaction known as anaphylactic shock.**

**On rare occasions fluid can leak out of the cannula during the infusion. If this happens this can cause long term or even permanent discoloration of your skin.**

**If you start to feel unwell while receiving your infusion please inform a member of staff immediately.**

**If you become unwell following your iron infusion you must seek advice form your GP or A&E informing them you have had an iron infusion.**

### **When should ferinject not be given?**

**Ferinject should not be given if you have had an allergic reaction to any other iron drip or injection, or you are known to have iron overload. It should not be given in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.**

**Caution is required if patients have had severe allergic reactions to other drugs.**

### **How is the infusion given?**

**The infusion is given on the day unit.**

**Prior to receiving your iron infusion the nurse will monitor your temperature, blood pressure, pulse, respiratory rate and oxygen saturation level.**

**You will then have a cannula inserted into your vein. This will be flushed with a small amount of sodium chloride (salty water) to ensure it is inserted in the vein properly. This may feel cold, please inform the nurse if you feel any pain.**

**The nurse will then attach the drip to your cannula. The infusion goes through an electric pump and takes between 15 and 30 minutes.**

**Once the drip has finished your cannula will be flushed again with sodium chloride.**

**Once the infusion has finished you will have to stay for 30 minutes to ensure you do not develop any side effects.**

**If there are no other reasons for you to remain in hospital you may be discharged home. You can drive, take public transport or travel home alone.**

### **Follow up?**

**Following your iron infusion you will have your bloods checked by your GP 1 month after the infusion. Then 3 monthly to monitor.**