

NHS England Guidance: Medicines of Low Value

LIDOCAINE 5% MEDICATED PLASTERS

Summary

Routine prescribing of lidocaine 5% medicated plasters outside of its product licenses for post-herpetic neuralgia is not recommended. This is in line with the NHS England guidance of items which should not routinely be prescribed in primary care (1).

- New Patients: Prescribers should not initiate lidocaine 5% medicated plasters outside of its license for post-herpetic neuralgia for any new patients (1)
- Existing patients: Patients established on lidocaine 5% medicated plasters outside of its licensed indication should be reviewed with a view to changing to an alternative analgesic (2).

These recommendations do not apply to patients who have been treated in line with NICE CG173 Neuropathic pain in adults: pharmacological management in non-specialist settings but are still experiencing neuropathic pain associated with previous herpes zoster infection (post-herpetic neuralgia) (1).

NHS England category: Item of low clinical effectiveness, where there is a lack of robust evidence of clinical effectiveness or there are significant safety concerns (1).

Lidocaine plasters can be applied for pain relief and are licensed for symptomatic relief of neuropathic pain associated with previous herpes zoster infection (post-herpetic neuralgia, PHN) in adults. NICE CG173 Neuropathic pain in adults: pharmacological management in non-specialist settings does not recommend lidocaine plasters for treating neuropathic pain.

Deprescribing advice (1)

Licensed indication: Review and continue if there is an ongoing need.

- Ensure treatment used correctly & people have at least 12hr treatment free period every 24hrs.
- Review use at four weeks and STOP if ineffective
- If to continue, review every six months. Assess pain, impact on lifestyle, wellbeing, adverse effects and continuing need.
- Consider...
 - Reducing the number of plasters used
 - Increasing the interval between plasters
 - A 'trial without' to assess ongoing need.
 - A trial of un-medicated physical protection (with cling film or a suitable dressing) is also an option.

Unlicensed indication:

- Review with a view to stopping the lidocaine plasters
- Consider alternative treatments appropriate to the indication (if applicable)
- For neuropathic pain, consider a NICE-approved medication such as amitriptyline, gabapentin, pregabalin or duloxetine.

References

1. **NHS England and NHS Clinical Commissioners.** *Items which should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: Guidance for CCGs.* s.l. : NHS England, 30 November 2017.
2. **PrescQIPP.** *Lidocaine plasters (DROP-List).* November 2017.

