

Patient information about changes to medicines or treatments on the NHS: [Changes to prescribing of Lidocaine Plasters](#)

The NHS is asking prescribers to stop or greatly reduce the prescribing of some medicines. This is because the medicines are:

- Not as safe as other medicines OR
- Not as good (effective) as other medicines OR
- More expensive than other medicines that do the same thing.

This includes lidocaine plasters.

This document will explain why the changes are happening and where you can get more information and support.

[What are lidocaine plasters used for?](#)

Lidocaine plasters are applied to the skin and are used to relieve nerve pain, which can occur after a shingles infection in adults.

Lidocaine plasters are sometimes used for other types of pain relief.

[What is this change and what is the reason for it?](#)

NHS guidance states that lidocaine plasters should not be routinely prescribed as there is very little evidence that lidocaine plasters work for nerve pain, compared to other treatment options.

Lidocaine plasters are also very expensive compared to other treatment options, making them poor value for money.

In rare circumstances, lidocaine plasters may be prescribed for nerve pain associated with shingles if all other possible treatments fail or can't be used, and they are recommended by a specialist

[What options are available instead of lidocaine plasters?](#)

If you are already receiving lidocaine plasters on prescription, your doctor will review your treatment.

You can talk to your doctor about other pain relief options that are available, so you can both come to a joint decision on the best option to relieve your pain.

You can also discuss non-medical treatments to help manage your pain such as massages, ice or heat therapy, or gentle exercise.

Where can I find more information and support?

- You can speak to your local pharmacist, GP, or the person who prescribed the medication to you.
- National and local charities can offer advice and support, for example:
 - Pain Concern: <http://painconcern.org.uk/>
 - Pain UK: <https://painuk.org>
- NICE Guidance: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg173>
- The Patients Association can also offer support and advice: www.patients-association.org.uk/ or freephone 0800 345 7115
- Healthwatch is an online resource where you can feedback on your healthcare experiences: www.healthwatch.co.uk

Find out more about the medicines that are being stopped or reduced:
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/medicines/items-which-should-not-be-routinely-prescribed>