



Patient & Family Guide
2020

Injectable Iron and Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD)

Aussi disponible en français :

Fer injectable et insuffisance rénale chronique (IRC)
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www.nshealth.ca

Injectable Iron and Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD)

What is injectable iron?

- Injectable forms of iron help your body make hemoglobin. Hemoglobin is found in your red blood cells. When there is not enough iron, red blood cells don't have enough hemoglobin to carry oxygen throughout your body. There are several types of injectable iron available.
- If your body is not getting enough oxygen due to lack of iron, you may feel tired or short of breath. This is called iron deficiency anemia.

Why does someone with Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) need injectable iron?

- Many patients with CKD, or who are on dialysis, have anemia because their red blood cells are low. The body needs iron to help make new red blood cells.
- Some people with CKD may need to take medicine called erythropoiesis-stimulating agent (ESA). If you need ESA, you will need enough iron in your body for this medicine to work its best.
- Getting iron injections can help make sure that you have enough iron in your body to make the oxygen-carrying part (hemoglobin) of your red blood cells.

How do I take injectable iron?

- This medicine is given intravenously (injected into a vein with a needle). A member of your kidney care team will set up the injection. After each dose of IV (intravenous) iron, you will need to stay for 30 minutes so staff can check for any reaction to the medicine.
- If you are doing your own dialysis at home, and are injecting your own IV iron, we will show you the steps to take. We will also show you the steps to give yourself an EpiPen® injection. You may need this medicine in the rare case that a severe allergic reaction (anaphylactic shock) happens.

Are there any side effects?

- The most common side effects are:
 - › Nausea (feeling sick to your stomach)
 - › Vomiting (throwing up)
 - › Muscle cramps
 - › Rash
 - › Itchiness at the injection site
 - › Low blood pressure
- Rare, but serious, side effects include:
 - › Anaphylaxis (allergic reaction)
 - › Shortness of breath

How should I store this medicine?

- If you are doing your own dialysis at home, store it at room temperature.
- Keep it out of reach of children.

**What are your questions?
Please ask. We are here to help you.**

Looking for more health information?

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: <http://library.nshealth.ca/PatientGuides>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time: call 811 or visit <https://811.novascotia.ca>

Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.