

## Intravenous Iron in General Practice



Dr Pradeep Jayasuriya  
Next Practice Cloverdale

1

## Key Messages

Intravenous iron infusions can be safely and effectively administered in general practice

- Right reason
- Right dose
- Reduce risk by adhering to protocol
- Informed consent is crucial
- Streamlined practice systems
- Follow up is essential and ensure a diagnosis is established

2

## Iron Deficiency - A Recap

- A common condition – 80-120 patients per FTE
- Variable presentations, across age spectrum and accompanies many other conditions
- Better outcomes with treatment often independent of anaemia
- A cause must be ascribed when ID is found - may need further investigation

3

- Absolute ID – Ferritin <30
- Functional ID - T sat <20, Ferritin 300 in chronic inflammation
- Anaemia - Hb <130 (male) Hb <120 (Female)
- Most cases can be managed safely and effectively in general practice
- Oral iron is generally first line option

4

## Oral Iron - Which Preparation ?



5

## Oral Iron - Instructions

- Take on empty stomach: In-between meals (1-1/2 hour before or after meal)
- Do not take at same time as other medication or supplements
- Do not take any acid reducing agents around the time of the iron dose (1-1/2 hr apart, and then discourage)
- Take with water. No tea, coffee or calcium enriched liquids
- Advise starting on stool softener at same time oral regime starts

**NOTE:** If diarrhoea starts within first 24-48 hours of starting iron source reduce dose by 50%.

6

## Indications for Intravenous Iron

- Failure of oral iron therapy
  - Intolerance
  - Poor adherence
  - Poor response
- Malabsorption (e.g. inflammatory bowel disease, gastric paresis, some bariatric surgery)
- Chronic renal impairment or cardiac failure
- Ongoing loss of iron (blood) exceeding absorptive capacity (e.g. angiodysplasia)
- Clinical need for a rapid iron supply
- Pregnancy - refer guidelines, <https://www.blood.gov.au/pbm-module-5>

7

## Contraindications and Precautions for i.v. iron carboxymaltose



### Contraindications

- Iron overload
- Microcytic anaemia not due to ID
- Known hypersensitivity to particular i.v. agent
- Pregnancy first trimester
- Children <14 yrs

### Precautions

- Significant hepatic dysfunction
- Acute or chronic infection
- Multiple allergic disorders
- Reaction to other i.v. iron preparations

8

## Intravenous Iron in general practice – What do you need

- Infusing versus push doses
- Trained and skilled nurses (cannulation training and online training <https://bloodsafelearning.org.au/>)
- Equipment
- Protocol for infusing
- Consent procedure
- Good practice systems (process and documentation)
- Patient information
- Establish fees/costs
- Follow up arrangement

9

## Iron Infusions - Equipment

### Equipment:

- Cannulas 20g
- Normal Saline bags 100ml/500ml
- i.v Giving Set/.Pump
- Resus equipment

### Treatment Room

- Bed/Chair



10

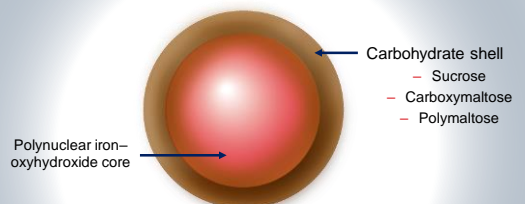
## Types of intravenous iron in Australia

- Iron Polymaltose (FerrumH/Ferrosig)
- Iron Sucrose (Venofer)
- Ferric Carboxymaltose (Ferinject)



11

## The Structure of intravenous iron



12

## Iron Polymaltose

\$4.00/ 100mg

Suitable for TDI up to 2500 mg over 5-6 hours (or accelerated infusion)

Similar indications to Fe Carboxymaltose

Similar Adverse Drug Events (ADEs) to Fe Carboxymaltose

## Iron Sucrose

\$13.00 per 100mg

Multiple 100-200 mg doses or larger 500mg\* dose

Licensed and PBS listed in Australia for :

- ✓ renal indications: IDA in combination with ESA
- ✓ documented hypersensitivity reaction to polymaltose
- ✓ continued IV iron infusions where appropriate
- ✓ undergoing chronic haemodialysis

Life threatening ADE's 0.6 per million and deaths 0.1 per million

## Fe Carboxymaltose

- \$30.00 per 100mg
- Up to 1000 mg (20mg/kg) over 15 minutes
- PBS listed (*iron deficiency anaemia where oral therapy is ineffective, not tolerated or inappropriate*)
- Comparison with other IV irons:
  - Similar rates of Injection site reactions, headache, hypertension, dizziness, vomiting and diarrhea
  - Lower rates of hypotension and taste disturbance
  - Higher rates of hypophosphatemia phosphate, flushing and increased ALT



14

## How much to give ? – Calculation of iron deficit

Ganzoni formula:

Total body iron deficit/cumulative iron dose (mg) =  
body weight\* (kg) x (target Hb – actual Hb in g/L) x 0.24\*\* + iron depot\*\*\*

\*Use ideal body weight in overweight patients. If underweight, use actual body weight

\*\*The factor 0.24= 0.0034 x 0.07 x 1,000:

For this calculation the iron content of haemoglobin = 0.34%,  
blood volume = 7% of the bodyweight, and  
1,000 is the conversion from g to mg

\*\*\*Iron depot:

<35 kg body weight: iron depot = 15 mg/kg body weight  
≥35 kg body weight: iron depot = 500 mg

15

## How much to give ? – Calculation using the simplified method (doses for Fe Carboxymaltose)

Hb (g/L)	*Body weight 35 to <50 kg	*Body weight 50 to <70 kg	*Body weight ≥70 kg
	<b>Total deficit: 1000 mg</b>	<b>Total deficit: 1000 mg</b>	<b>Total deficit: 1500 mg</b>
<b>Hb ≥100 g/L</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> dose: 500 mg 2 <sup>nd</sup> dose: 500 mg	1 <sup>st</sup> dose: 1000 mg 2 <sup>nd</sup> dose: not required	1 <sup>st</sup> dose: 1000 mg 2 <sup>nd</sup> dose: 500 mg
	<b>Total deficit: 1400 mg</b>	<b>Total deficit: 1500 mg</b>	<b>Total deficit: 2000 mg</b>
<b>Hb &lt;100 g/L</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> dose: 700 mg 2 <sup>nd</sup> dose: 700 mg	1 <sup>st</sup> dose: 1000 mg 2 <sup>nd</sup> dose: 500 mg	1 <sup>st</sup> dose: 1000 mg 2 <sup>nd</sup> dose: 1000 mg

\*If Hb normal or Hb <70 g/L, calculate total body iron deficit more accurately using Ganzoni formula

16

## Iron Infusion - Process



- Provide good patient information
- Consent overload
- Insert cannula to forearm (avoid back of hand)
- Assemble Equipment, add iron to the infusion fluid 100-200ml N saline) and mix the contents.
- Flush the intravenous cannula with at least 10ml 0.9% Sodium Chloride prior to connecting the iron infusion
- Infusion over 15 min
- Monitor Temp , PR and BP (0, 5, 15 min and 30 min post infusion)
- Check Hb and Ferritin at 6 weeks
- Post infusion instruction

17

## Adverse Events to Fe Carboxymaltose

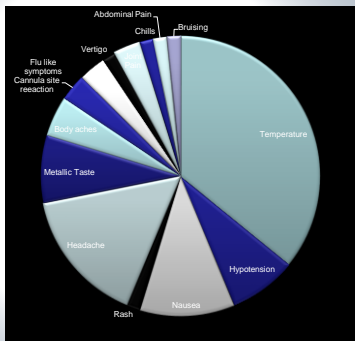


- Pain at Insertion Site
- Immediate Reactions -  
Bronchospasm, Hypotension, Flushing , diarrhoea, vomiting
- Late Reactions – headache, fever, joint pain , hypophosphataemia (?significance)
- At Belmont n=2000 , minor AEs around 30%

18

## Adverse Events

~30% mild



19

## Staining/Tattoos

- From paravenous leakage of iron solutions "improper fixation or placement of cannula"
- Length and duration of staining related to volume of drug extravasated
- Often permanent
- Frequency :  
 PI : 1-10/1000  
 MDU: 1:20  
 Belmont Clinic : Nil after 1500



20

## Staining

### What to Do

#### Protocol with clear instructions

- Stop infusion
- Some guidelines recommend aspiration
- Elevate/ice pack
- Medical review/documentation
- Inform patient and arrange ongoing follow up and management

#### Treatment

- Limited case studies only
- Laser treatment
- Chemical treatments
- Vifor recommends avoidance of sun exposure

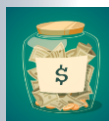
### Minimise risk

- Informed Consent
- Clear indication i.v. iron
- Appropriately trained personnel
- Avoid sites of multiple venepuncture
- Use large veins and avoid sites prone to movement (back of hand)
- High gauge cannula (Vifor)
- Check position by aspirating blood and then flush with saline before infusion
- Monitor infusion
- Flush with saline after infusion
- Stop infusion immediately if pain, swelling, redness develops

21

## Finances

- Set up costs (pump \$1-1.5K, chair \$4K)
- Currently there is NO MBS item number for infusion
- Cost of consumables ~\$20
- Nurse time ~30 min
- Most practices charge consultation item number and fee for administering iron .



22

## Summary

- Iron deficiency is common and most cases can be managed in general practice
- Iron can be safely and effectively administered in general practice
- Risks are minimised by:
  - good preparation
  - Clear indication for iv therapy
  - Initial and ongoing training of staff
  - Adhering to clear protocols
  - Routine process for informed consent
  - Good documentation
- Follow up and monitoring is essential

23

## Resources

- Online eLearning : <https://bloodsafelearning.org.au/>
- IV iron tools including patient information, consent and protocol: <https://bloodsafelearning.org.au/iv-iron-tools/>
- Administering IV iron , a video : <https://bloodsafelearning.org.au/resource-centre/videos>



24