

Topical Anesthetics – Beneficial for ALL ages

Why?

- ✓ To feel less pain and discomfort with needle pokes and to decrease needle fear

What are topical anesthetics?

- ✓ Creams or sprays that numb the skin
- ✓ Active ingredients are lidocaine with or without prilocaine (cream) or ethyl chloride (“cooling” spray)
- ✓ Numbing creams are available in our clinics, as prescription drugs (e.g. EMLA®) often covered by health insurances, and over-the-counter; cooling sprays are available in clinics and over-the-counter
- ✓ *Examples for over-the-counter numbing creams (this is meant to be an exclusive list):*



Who may benefit from topical anesthetics?

- ✓ People of all ages, from birth to childhood
- ✓ Numbing creams can be used from birth on, cooling sprays from the age of 3 years on

Who cannot use topical anesthetics?

- ✓ Pre-term newborns during the first week of life
- ✓ Children between 0 and 4 years of age may not like the spray as it feels quite cool
- ✓ You cannot use topical anesthetics if you are allergic to any of the ingredients
- ✓ Topical anesthetics cannot be used with skin tests (e.g. allergy skin testing)

When to use topical anesthetics?

- ✓ Numbing cream:
 - Apply at least 30 minutes, better 60 minutes prior to a needle poke
 - Consider applying the cream before you leave to your doctor's office

Where to apply the numbing cream?

- ✓ On the spot of the needle poke
- ✓ Can be placed on more than one spot
- ✓ Ask your doctor or nurse where to apply the cream before your next visit
- ✓ Do not apply it to skin that is cut, scraped, red, swollen, or sore.

How to apply the numbing cream?

- ✓ Apply in a thick layer on the site of the needle poke
- ✓ Do not rub the cream into the skin
- ✓ Cover with dressing such as a plastic wrap or Tegaderm
- ✓ Leave on until just before the procedure



Please ask your doctor or nurse

whether you can use topical anesthetics and which type at your next visit!