

Lidocaine-Prilocaine (EMLA®) Numbing Cream

EMLA cream is put on a small patch of skin to make it numb. It is used to decrease the pain from starting IV's, blood collection, procedures such as lumbar punctures and bone marrow aspirations, and shots. This medicine may also be used for skin surgeries. This cream works like Novocain® at the dentist's office. It is absorbed by the skin and numbs the nerve endings in the area so your child does not feel pain.

Important

- **If your child is allergic to or sensitive to numbing medicines like lidocaine and prilocaine, he or she should not take this medicine.** Be sure to tell your child's doctor and pharmacist if your child has had an unusual or allergic reaction to any medicine.
- If your child has or had methemoglobinemia, he or she **should not** use EMLA.
- **This medicine should be used with caution in children receiving tocainide, mexiletine, amiodarone, bretylium, sotalol and dofetilide.**

Doctor's Orders

- ☐ Infants up to 3 months of age - apply one half teaspoon (about the size of a nickel).
- ☐ Children older than 3 months of age – apply 1 teaspoon (the size of a quarter).
- Never use more than the amount written on the label. The ingredients in EMLA cream can cause heart problems or methemoglobinemia if used in too large amounts. Read the label carefully and make sure you are using the right amount.
- Be sure to measure accurately. Give the **exact dose** of medicine your doctor ordered.
- **Do not use** inside your child's mouth, near the eyes or an open wound.
- **Do not use** on scratched or broken skin, cuts or wounds.

How to Apply the Cream

- Apply a thick layer of lidocaine-prilocaine cream on the skin to be numbed. Cover the area with a plastic non-stick dressing. (Plastic wrap and a piece of tape also work well.)

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How to Apply the Cream, continued

- EMLA Cream starts to work 60 minutes after it is put on. You may leave it on up to 4 hours for children 3 months of age and older (1 hour for children under 3 months).
- You will know it is working if your child's skin starts to feel numb (child does not pull away when you touch the spot with your fingernail).
- Wipe off the EMLA with a clean cloth before the painful procedure. EMLA Cream will still work for 1 to 2 hours after it has been removed from the skin. Be careful not to scratch or rub your child's skin or put anything hot or cold on it while the skin is still numb. You may damage the skin while your child cannot feel pain.



Picture 1 Call your child's doctor right away if you see signs of anaphylaxis.

Possible Side Effects

Anaphylaxis (a life-threatening condition) may occur in children who have reacted to lidocaine, prilocaine, or other numbing medicines in the past. **Call your child's doctor and seek medical attention immediately if your child has any of these signs** (Picture 1):

- Skin gets very pale or light red in color
- Throat feels "funny" or child is short of breath
- Child is very dizzy or sleepy
- Lips or fingernails turn blue
- Child's lips are tingling

Symptoms of methemoglobinemia (a blood condition that can cause the skin, lips or fingernails to turn blue from lack of oxygen) may not occur until hours after the medicine is used. **Call your child's doctor and seek medical attention immediately if your child has any of these signs** (Picture 1):

- Pale-, gray-, or blue-colored skin, lips, nail beds
- Headache
- Lightheadedness
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Fast heart rate

Patients who are more likely to develop methemoglobinemia:

- Very young
- Have congenital or idiopathic methemoglobinemia
- G-6-PD deficient
- Newborns less than 37 weeks when they were born

Other Side Effects

- The skin may itch where the EMLA was placed. This should go away in 2 hours.
- Call your child's doctor if he or she is having any side effects that continue or are very bothersome.

Medicine Storage

- **Store all medicine out of the reach of children.**
- Always keep medicine in the original container from the pharmacy.
- Do **not** keep this medicine in the refrigerator.
- Keep the container tightly closed.
- Do not use this medicine after the expiration date printed on the container.

Safety Tips and Other Advice

- Ask your pharmacist for 2 labeled containers if your child care provider will be giving this medicine.
- If you carry medicine in your purse, keep it in its childproof container and keep your purse out of the reach of children.
- Bring all your child's medicines with you **in the original containers** whenever he or she sees a doctor, goes to an emergency room or is admitted to the hospital. This helps doctors who may not know your child.
- Learn the name, spelling and dose of this medicine. Also, teach your child if he is old enough. You will need to know this information when you call your doctor or pharmacist.
- **If your child takes too much of this medicine, or if someone else takes this medicine, first call the Central Ohio Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222 (TTY 614-228-2272).** They will tell you what to do.
- The doctor has prescribed this medicine for your child **only**. Do not give it to anyone else.
- When the medicine is no longer needed, mix the leftover medicine with an unwanted material like coffee grounds and place the mixture into a container or a bag that will not leak. Throw the container away in the trash where children and pets cannot reach it.

If you have any questions, be sure to ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist.