

### IN-PATIENT, OUT-PATIENT OR COMMUNITY INITIATION

#### Indications

1. Post herpetic neuralgia where alternative treatment has proved ineffective or is contraindicated<sup>1</sup>
2. All off label prescribing to be initiated only by West Suffolk Integrated Pain Management Service (WSIPMS).  
Out of hours initiation by the WSFT Anaesthetic Services is permissible provided that the WSIPMS is informed and the WSIPMS sends a management and review plan to the GP

#### Step 1

WSIPMS to provide patient with their Lidocaine Plaster Patient Information Leaflet (PIL), in addition to manufacturer's PIL. Discuss with them the management and review plan.

#### Step 2

WSIPMS to send management and review plan to GP and patient

### PRIMARY CARE GUIDANCE

Follow recommendations as shown in **Box A** or **Box B** below

#### Box A: In-patient initiation

- Follow advice in management and review plan from WSIPMS
  - Do not prescribe any more lidocaine plasters or contact WSIPMS if:
    - Management and review plan not received
    - Management and review plan does not clarify when to stop lidocaine plasters
  - If patient has gained demonstrable benefit from lidocaine plasters and/or pain increases on stopping:
    - Prescribe lidocaine plasters for a further 2-4 weeks (max 8 weeks)
    - GP to telephone or email the WSIPMS to discuss on-going prescribing (if prescribing beyond 8 weeks seems to be needed). Continue to prescribe until the telephone/email advice received, then follow further advice given.

**Only very few patients with very severe problems will require lidocaine plasters for >8 weeks**
  - Also **stop** lidocaine plasters if:
    - They are not working
    - Advised to stop in the management and review plan
    - Patient is not attending the review appointments
- All prescribed lidocaine plasters should be reviewed at least once every 3 months by the patient's practice**

#### Box B: WSIPMS Out-patient or community initiation/recommendation to prescribe

- Only prescribe lidocaine plasters if clear advice is given in a management and review plan, included in a clinic letter from WSIPMS. This will be individualised to meet patient needs.
  - Contact WSIPMS or stop lidocaine plasters if management and review plan does not state when to stop.
  - Assess the patients' on-going needs at least once every 3 months. Stop the lidocaine plasters if possible.
- Only very few patients with very severe problems will require lidocaine plasters for >8 weeks**
- Also **stop** lidocaine plasters if:
    - They are not working
    - Advised to stop in management and review plan
    - Patient is not attending the review appointments
- All prescribed lidocaine plasters should be reviewed at least once every 3 months by the patient's practice**

**P.T.O. for advice on how to stop lidocaine plasters, and tips to avoid over-prescribing.  
If prescribing is indicated, prescribe as Ralvo® brand**

### Advice on how to stop lidocaine plasters

- Stop lidocaine plasters and assess pain symptoms after 24 hours. If symptoms are manageable, then do not prescribe any more.
- or**
- Increase the length of time without lidocaine plasters to be >12 hours per day. Gradually increase the plaster-free interval until the plasters are completely stopped.
- or**
- Cut the lidocaine plasters into smaller pieces (or just use one plaster if previously more than one was used), trying this if the painful area has reduced in size. Continue to reduce the size of the pieces until the plasters are completely stopped.

**If stopping the lidocaine plasters has been unsuccessful, try again at least once every 3 months.**

### Tips to avoid over-prescribing

- Discontinue treatment after 4 weeks if ineffective.
- State on the prescription exactly which part of the body the lidocaine plasters should be applied to.
- Prescribe the exact quantity required and do not prescribe a full box of 30 lidocaine plasters unless genuinely indicated.
- Do not put lidocaine plasters on repeat, other than in exceptional circumstances.

**Only very few patients with very severe problems will require lidocaine plasters for >8 weeks.**

- Alert prescribing clerks to monitor usage/over-ordering.
- Exclude the skin protective effect of lidocaine plasters as the sole mechanism of benefit; this does not justify prescribing them.