

Topical Anaesthetic Cream/Gel Information for Parents and Carers

What are topical anaesthetics?

Topical anaesthetics are creams or gels that are used to numb skin and reduce pain before we insert a needle or a cannula "Freddie". A thick blob of anaesthetic cream will be applied to the area of your child's skin to be numbed and left in place for 45 - 60 minutes before their needle or "Freddie" is put in place. The cream/gel is kept in place using a sticky plastic dressing. The plaster will keep the cream/gel in place to allow time for the anaesthetic to be absorbed and numb the skin. It will stop the cream/gel from being rubbed off. The area may be marked with a pen.

Are there side effects?

You may notice some changes in the colour of your child's skin, this is normal and will fade. Some children can be allergic to the ingredients, which may cause itching, swelling or blisters where the cream/gel has been applied. Side effects usually stop once the cream/gel is wiped off and the area is washed.

As your child's skin is numb please make sure they do not scratch or burn their skin, they may not be aware of damaging their skin.

Products we use

At Children's Health Ireland (CHI) we use Ametop Gel and EMLA Cream.

Ametop Gel Is put in place 45 minutes beforehand. The area of skin will remain numb for 4-6 hours. Ametop increases the size of the blood vessels where it has been applied and can cause temporary redness. This is quite common.

EMLA Cream Is put in place 1 hour before the procedure. The site will remain numb for 2 hours. EMLA cream makes the blood vessels smaller where it has been applied and can cause temporary whiteness of the skin.

