

Changes to prescriptions for lidocaine plasters

Information for patients

Why are prescriptions for lidocaine plasters changing?

In December 2024, the Scottish Government published new guidance about some medicines. Lidocaine plasters are now classed as a “Medicine of Low Clinical Value.”

This means that, for most people, there is not enough evidence that lidocaine plasters work well for pain, especially when compared with other treatments. They are also very expensive, so they are not considered good value for money for the NHS.

When should lidocaine plasters be used?

Under the new guidance, lidocaine plasters should only be prescribed for:

- Nerve pain following shingles (also called post-herpetic neuralgia), or
- Patients receiving palliative care.

Lidocaine plasters are not recommended for other types of pain, including most other kinds of nerve pain, because there is no strong evidence that they are effective.

What does this mean for you?



GP practices have been asked to remove lidocaine plasters from repeat prescriptions where they are no longer recommended.

If you are asked to stop using these plasters:

- They are not expected to be providing much benefit
- Most people do not notice a worsening of pain when they stop
- You can stop using them safely.

What if my pain comes back?

Helpful information and self-management advice is available online at:

<p>NHS Inform – Chronic Pain: www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/brain-nerves-and-spinal-cord/chronic-pain/</p>	
<p>Pain Concern: https://painconcern.org.uk</p>	

If you feel you need further support, please contact your GP practice to request a pain review. They can discuss other treatment options that may work better for you.

Need more help?

If you have any questions or concerns, or if you feel unsure about stopping your medication, please speak to your GP practice or pharmacist. They are there to help you.