

# Application of Topical Anaesthetic Prior to Cannulation

## What is a topical anaesthetic cream?

A topical anaesthetic cream (e.g., EMLA® or Maxilene 4® cream) is used to create a temporary loss of feeling or numbness of the skin before putting in a needle.

## Are there side effects?

Side effects are rare and may include whitening or redness of the skin and slight puffiness and initial burning or itching on the skin where the cream is applied. These are normal reactions and will disappear without treatment.

## When should a topical anaesthetic cream be applied?

A topical anaesthetic cream is best applied one

hour before dialysis. This allows it time to work before putting in a needle.

## How is topical anaesthetic cream applied?

Wash your hands before and after applying the cream.

1. At least one hour before dialysis, squeeze about 1.25 cm (0.5 in) of cream or the size of a nickel onto your access above or below your previous needle sites.
2. Spread the cream along your access.
3. Cover with a clear plastic wrap.
4. When it is time for dialysis, the nurse will remove the plastic wrap and clean the area.



**Step 1**



**Step 2**



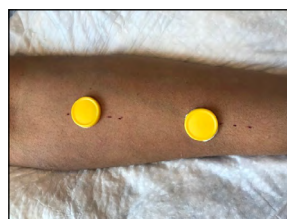
**Step 3**

If your nurse gave you caps, use these steps:

1. Check there is no metal in the caps. If there is, do not use them as they may cut your skin.
2. At least one hour before dialysis, place a thick layer of cream on the inside of each cap.
3. Place the caps onto your access above or below your previous needle sites.
4. Secure the caps.
5. When it is time for dialysis, the nurse will remove the caps and clean the area.



**Step 1**



**Step 2**



**Step 3**