Follow-up:

You will be given a form to check your haemoglobin level and iron studies after your infusion.

Some patients will require ongoing tests so that a further iron infusion can be given before the haemoglobin level falls to a low level. Your nurse will discuss this with you prior to discharge.

If you have any concerns or questions please contact the Haematology Day Ward on PH: 270-4718

Haematology Day Ward

COUNTIES MANUKAU DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD
A Community Partnership

Review : June 2007

Haematology Day Ward

Intravenous Iron

COUNTIES MANUKAU DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD
A Community Partnership

Phone: 270-4718

Iron Infusion
(Iron Polymaltose)

Blood tests have shown that you are anaemic (you have a reduced level of Haemoglobin) because you are deficient in iron. Causes of iron deficiency can include an iron depleted diet, poor absorption of iron or bleeding. You therefore need to receive iron. Your Doctor thinks the best way for you to receive this is intravenously (i.e. through a vein).

An intravenous iron infusion rapidly replenishes your body's iron stores and allows you to make red blood cells. Blood tests show that once iron is replaced the body starts making more red blood cells within 2 weeks.

Procedure:

The iron solution is given through an intravenous drip placed in your hand or arm. A small dose is given first to ensure you do not have a reaction to it. Then the rest of the dose is given over 3-6 hours depending upon your dose. Over this time the nurses will monitor your blood pressure, pulse, temperature and oxygen level.

Subsequent infusions are quicker.

Side Effects:

Intravenous iron is commonly used and has been shown to be safe. However a small number of reactions/side effects do occur. These include getting a headache, vomiting, muscle ache and flushing. Rarely more serious reactions do occur such as breathing difficulties, developing low blood pressure, collapse. Sometimes these reactions can be stopped by slowing down the rate the iron is being given to you or, rarely having to stop the infusion. On very rare instances drugs may need to be given to help if breathing or blood pressure problems occur.

What you can do to help.

Iron is found in a number of foods. It is found in two forms; **haem** and **non haem.**

- Haem iron foods include; beef, lamb, liver, kidney, pork, poultry, seafood
- Non-haem iron foods include; vegetables, bread, breakfast cereals, beans and lentils, eggs, nuts and fruit.

The body absorbs haem iron more easily than non-haem iron.

Vitamin C helps whilst drinking tea impairs your body's ability to absorb iron.

Therefore:

*eat foods high in iron especially haem iron.

*each foods high in vitamin C (e.g. fruit and vegetables) with your meal

*avoid drinking tea with your meal.

*Some patients will also be given iron tablets .