

Patient Experience Hints & Tips

Lidocaine infusion

- In early 2022 I had an infusion of Lidocaine at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital. I had waited over six months for this due to the Covid pandemic.
- Two days before the procedure I had a Covid PCR test, and then a Lateral Flow Test on the morning of the procedure.
- I had to fast from midnight and arrive at the hospital at 7AM.
- Although your belongings will be stored in a locker, as with any hospital visit it is advised not to take more valuables with you than you need.
- Once at the hospital I was given a gown and a bag for my belongings, and asked to change.
- There were then the usual questions and medical pre-checks: next-of-kin, blood pressure, height, weight, prescribed medication, allergies, your last meal and drinks.
- A cannula was inserted in the back of my hand and clear liquid (saline solution) was run in to ensure the cannula was working OK.
- From then I had a heart monitor, and my blood pressure was taken every 10 minutes.
- Soon after this the Consultant started the Lidocaine infusion and handed my care back to the Registrar.
- The infusion took two hours, during which I was constantly monitored by the Nurses and Registrar.
- Once the infusion finished, all the monitors were removed, but the cannula was left in.
- I was given tea and biscuits, and had more BP checks. I was asked if I felt dizzy or sick or lightheaded, which I did for first 30 minutes.
- After that I was OK. I was sent off to the loo for a pee, allowed to get dressed, and went to the discharge room.
- I saw the Consultant, the discharge paperwork was completed, and the cannula removed.
- I had to be collected, but the Nurses forgot to call my husband to say I was ready for collecting, so ended up waiting in Starbucks round the corner for him to arrive.
- Normally this would have been a full day at the hospital as they are often very slow with discharge etc. However due to Covid they wanted patients out as quickly as possible; which was great as there was no hanging around! I was out by 12 noon.
- Overall I felt safe in relation to Covid measures and distancing from other patients.