

# **Silver nitrate for topical treatment of stomal granulomas**

**Information for patients**





## **What is a granuloma?**

A stomal granuloma is a red lump often seen at the edge of your stoma. The granuloma may bleed easily and can be painful and prevent your stoma appliance from sticking properly.

## **What is silver nitrate?**

Silver nitrate is a topical treatment applied directly onto the skin using a 'matchstick' applicator. It cauterises (burns) the wound to treat overgrown tissue and can reduce bleeding. Your stoma nurse will be trained to apply this medication, as it can damage healthy tissue around the granuloma otherwise.

Treatment with silver nitrate is optional; please speak to your doctor if you would like information about alternative treatments for stomal granuloma that may be available to you.

# Possible side effects

## **Very Common**

You may find the application process uncomfortable or painful.

## **Common**

You may receive a chemical burn to the surrounding area.

Your skin may be stained.

Clothing around the area may be stained.

## **Very Rarely**

In very rare cases undesirable effects may occur. However we take measures to reduce the chance of this happening by applying only small quantities of silver nitrate and avoiding over usage.

## **Possible rare side effects are:**

**Argyria** (accumulation of silver and silver compounds) – This can occur if silver nitrate is applied over a long period of time in large quantities. Argyria is thought to be harmless, however does cause silver-grey discolouration of the skin.

**Methaemoglobinaemia** (nitrate absorption) – This can occur if silver nitrate is given in sizable doses when used as an antiseptic. The main symptom is skin discoloration, but more serious side effects include: headache, shortness of breath, nausea, rapid heart rate, fatigue and lethargy, confusion, loss of consciousness.

## **Who is suitable for treatment with silver nitrate?**

You might not be suitable for topical silver nitrate treatment if you have one or more of the following:

- Known hypersensitivity / allergy to silver nitrate
- Previous adverse reaction to silver nitrate during treatment

Please speak to your nurse if you have any questions or concerns about your suitability for treatment.

## **Will treatment with silver nitrate work for me?**

Your nurse will speak to you about how soon you can expect the silver nitrate to start working. If the treatment has not improved your symptoms after this time (typically 1-2 months), your stoma specialist nurse will discuss an alternative treatment. Alternative treatments might include a referral to the Dermatology Department or the Colorectal Surgical Team.

# How to contact us

## Colorectal Nursing Team

Email: [colorectal.nursing@ouh.nhs.uk](mailto:colorectal.nursing@ouh.nhs.uk)

Tel: **01865 221 839** (John Radcliffe Hospital)

**01865 235 367** (Churchill Hospital)

Please leave a message on the answering machine and a member of the team will get back to you as soon as possible.

The department is open Monday-Friday, 8am - 4pm. It is preferable to contact the hospital where you are receiving treatment.

All calls and emails will be responded to by the end of the next working day.



If you need an interpreter or would like this information leaflet in another format, such as Easy Read, large print, Braille, audio, electronically or another language, please speak to the department where you are being seen. You will find their contact details on your appointment letter.

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