

Review of Your Pain Medication – Lidocaine 5% Plasters

As part of an ongoing review of treatment plans to ensure the best use of NHS resources and to continue providing the most appropriate care, we are writing to inform you of a change regarding your prescription for **lidocaine 5% plasters**.

These patches are currently only licensed for a specific type of nerve pain that occurs after shingles, known as *post-herpetic neuralgia*. While they may have been prescribed for other types of long-term pain in the past, new guidance from the **All-Wales Medicines Strategy Group** highlights that the **evidence for benefit in other conditions is very limited**, and that they are significantly more expensive than other available options that may be equally or more effective.

What Does This Mean for You?

In line with national guidance, we will be **stopping prescriptions for lidocaine plasters** in patients using them outside of their licensed indication. We want to reassure you that:

- **Most people do not notice a significant difference in their symptoms** after stopping the plasters, particularly if they were not providing strong relief to begin with.
- This change is being made to help ensure the best possible care using effective and appropriate treatments.

Next Steps:

- Please stop using the lidocaine plasters once your current supply runs out, unless advised otherwise.
- You **should not notice a major change in your pain levels**. However, if your symptoms worsen, we are here to help.
- If needed, you can book a medication review with a clinician to explore alternative treatments, which may include:
 - Medicines with stronger evidence for nerve or musculoskeletal pain
 - Referral to pain management services or specialist clinics
 - Support with physical therapies and wellbeing-based approaches

We Understand This May Be Concerning

We know that changes in pain treatment can feel unsettling, especially when living with persistent pain. Please be assured that this decision is **not a reflection of your experience** but part of a wider move towards evidence-based and more sustainable care. We are here to support you and will work with you to find the best way forward. If you have any concerns or would like to speak with someone about this change, please don't hesitate to contact the surgery.

Thank you for your understanding.

Warm regards,
Brecon Medical Practice