

Supportive care

Lidocaine 5% plaster (Versatis® medicated plaster)

Supportive care: specialist medicines

This leaflet provides information on a medicine called lidocaine which is used to treat pain in palliative care and supportive care patients. It is offered as a guide to you and your family. The possible benefits of treatment vary; your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist will be happy to answer any questions you have about your treatment.

We may be recommending this medicine to be used for a condition it was not originally designed for; so you may find that there are some differences between the hospital and the manufacturer's information. This additional information will inform you of the reason(s) why you are taking this medicine and to highlight any other information. This should be read in conjunction with the manufacturer's patient information leaflet.

What is Versatis®?

Versatis® medicated plasters are large patches made with a special gel that allows the active ingredient, lidocaine to seep into the skin. The plasters are worn for 12 hours out of 24 on the painful area of skin. They can be used alongside other medications and treatments you are currently using.

How does Versatis® work?

Versatis® contains lidocaine, which belongs to a group of medicines known as local anaesthetics, which work by reducing the amount of pain on your skin by temporarily blocking the pathway of pain signals along nerves.

When is Versatis® prescribed?

There is evidence that Versatis® may be used for the treatment of symptoms other than those specified by the medicine's manufacturer and there is now plenty of experience to confirm the effectiveness of such use.

Versatis® may be useful in the treatment of cancer pain, or pain associated with cancer treatment caused by damage to the nerves in your skin, which is also known as neuropathic pain. Neuropathic pain is often described as burning, shooting or stabbing. This can be very painful and the pain can last for a long time.

Versatis® is always prescribed by a doctor or nurse who specialises in treating pain and other symptoms of advanced cancer.



What dose of Versatis® is usually prescribed?

The usual daily dose is to use between 1 and 3 plasters on the painful areas of your skin. Versatis® may be cut into smaller pieces to fit the affected area(s). You should not use more than three plasters at the same time.

Versatis® should remain in contact with your skin for 12 hours only. The plaster should be removed after 12 hours so that you have a 12 hour period with no plaster.

If you have more pain at night you may want to put the plaster on at 7:00pm and remove it at 7:00am. If you have more pain in the day you might prefer to use Versatis® at 7:00am and remove it at 7:00pm.

Before you use Versatis®:

Do not use Versatis®

- If you are hypersensitive (allergic) to lidocaine or any of the other ingredients of Versatis®
- If you have had an allergic reaction to other products which are similar to lidocaine, such as bupivacaine, or prilocaine.

Take special care with Versatis®:

You should talk to your doctor or specialist nurse before using Versatis® if you have any of the following:

- Severe liver disease
- Severe heart disease
- Severe kidney problems

Versatis® should not be used on injured skin or open wounds.

What are the possible risks/side-effects?

Like all medicines, Versatis® can cause side-effects, although not everybody gets them. Versatis® is used topically (on the skin), which minimises the risk of a toxic reaction to lidocaine. Evidence shows that only a small amount of lidocaine is absorbed systemically (in the blood system).

Blistering, bruising, burning, discolouration, itching, redness, or swelling at the application site can occur. If irritation does occur, the affected area should stay plaster free until it stops. It is important that you check your skin regularly. If blistering or severe irritation does occur, you should remove the plaster and inform your doctor or specialist nurse.

Skin injury is very uncommon with 1 out of 100 patients reporting this. There is a 1 in 1000 risk of a severe allergic reaction.

Please tell your doctor, specialist nurse or pharmacist if:

- Any of the side effects gets serious, or
- You notice any side-effects not listed in this leaflet

Do I need to have any tests or monitoring when using Versatis®?

No, there are no special monitoring requirements recommended whilst you are using Versatis®.

However, we do advise that you check your skin on a regular basis to look for signs of a skin reaction.

How do I apply Versatis®?

Always use Versatis® exactly as your doctor, nurse or pharmacist has told you.

Before you stick Versatis® on the affected area:

- Remove any hairs with scissors; do not shave the area in case the skin becomes inflamed or broken which will increase chance of systemic absorption.
- Creams and lotions may be used on the affected skin when you are not wearing the plaster.
- If you have had a recent bath or a shower, you should wait until your skin cools before using the plaster.
- The skin should be clean, dry and unbroken.
- If Versatis® needs to be cut to fit a smaller area, cut before the liner is removed.
- Versatis® should be placed directly over the painful area.
- Press Versatis on the skin for 10 seconds to ensure it sticks firmly.

Do not apply the plaster near the eyes or mouth.

Bathing, showering and swimming

If at all possible, contact with water should be avoided whilst using Versatis®. Bathe, shower or swim when you are not wearing the plaster.

If the plaster comes off

Very rarely the plaster might fall off, or come unstuck. If it does, try sticking it back on the same area. If it does not stay on, put a new plaster on.

If you forget to remove the plaster after 12 hours

As soon as you remember, remove the old plaster. A new plaster can be used again after 12 hours.

If you forget to use Versatis®

If you forget to use a new plaster after the 12 hour period with no plaster, you should stick on a new one as soon as you remember.

If you use more plasters than you should

If you use more plasters than necessary or wear them for too long, this may increase the risk of getting side effects.

If you have any further questions on using Versatis®, contact your specialist nurse, or ask your doctor or pharmacist.

How well or how quickly does Versatis® work?

Usually, you will feel some pain relief on the first day you use the plaster. However, it may take up to 2 to 4 weeks until the full pain relief effect of Versatis® is seen. Some patients do not find Versatis® helpful, and it is not possible to tell who will respond to treatment.

Can I take Versatis® with my other medicines?

Versatis® has a very low risk of interacting with other medicines. However, please tell your doctor, nurse or pharmacist if you are taking or have recently taken any other medicines. This includes medicines purchased without a prescription.

What is the length of treatment?

The length of treatment will depend on why you were started on Versatis® and how well it works. You will be reviewed periodically to assess whether your Versatis® can be reduced or discontinued. It may be necessary for your doctor or specialist nurse to change the dose during treatment. You can take Versatis® for as long as it helps your pain if you are not having any side effects.

If no relief from Versatis® is noted after 2-4 weeks, you should discuss whether to continue with your specialist.

What is the plan for follow up?

Follow up will vary from patient to patient. The Christie supportive care or pain team will manage the initiation of Versatis® and if it is effective, we may request that your GP or community palliative care team, takes over ongoing prescribing. We will share the plan for the prescribing and follow up of Versatis® with the appropriate practitioners (e.g. GPs, community Macmillan nurses etc). You may be reviewed in the supportive care or pain clinic on a regular basis to ensure Versatis® is still the right treatment for you.

Helping you judge the benefit from Versatis®

On reviewing your response, you may be asked a few questions. These will help you to give feedback on how your pain is responding to Versatis. You may be asked:

- How you are using the plasters
- Your pain score
- The level of distress caused by your pain
- How you are sleeping
- How you rate what you are able to do
- Your overall impression of how your pain has changed since starting the medicine.

You may find it helpful to keep a pain diary.

How do I get further prescriptions for Versatis®?

If you find Versatis® is effective in treating your pain, your GP or specialist community palliative care team may agree to continue prescribing for you, following discussion with The Christie supportive care team. Versatis® is available from community pharmacies, and you should ensure you request a prescription from your GP at least 72 hours in advance of your supply of medication running out.

If you are attending The Christie supportive care or pain clinic for follow up, Versatis® may be dispensed by the Christie Pharmacy. You should be given sufficient supply to last you until your next review.

If you run out of Versatis® and are unable to get a further supply, you must contact the supportive care team for advice.

Can I drive while using Versatis®?

Versatis is unlikely to affect your ability to drive or use heavy machinery.

Can I drink alcohol while using Versatis®?

Yes, you can drink alcohol in moderation when using Versatis®.

How do I remove Versatis®?

When removing the plaster, remove it slowly. If it does not come off easily, soak it with warm water for a few minutes before removing it. Used plasters still contain active ingredient, which may be harmful to others. Fold the plaster in half with the sticky sides together and dispose of it in the bin so they are out of reach of children and pets. **Do not flush the plaster down the toilet.**

If you have any unused plasters take these to your community pharmacist who will advise on how to dispose of them.

Are there any other things I need to know?

- Keep your medicines in a safe place, out of the reach of children and pets.
- Store the plasters in the original sachet, and close it tightly after first opening. Once open, the plasters should be used within 14 days.

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- Do not use Versatis® after the expiry date on the sachet and box.
- Do not use Versatis® if you notice that the sachet has been damaged. If this happens the plaster may dry out and become less sticky.
- Store at room temperature only
- Do not give your medication to anyone else as it may cause them serious harm.

Who should I contact if I need urgent advice about Versatis®?

Monday to Friday, 9:00am- 5:00pm contact the supportive care team on **0161 446 3559** or **0161 446 8493**.

During the evening or at weekends and bank holidays, if you have any queries, contact The Christie Hotline on **0161 446 3658**.

Useful contacts:

- Secretary: supportive care team - **0161 446 3559**
- Secretary: pain team - **0161 446 8493**
- Supportive care pharmacist - **0161 446 3443**
- The Christie Pharmacy - **0161 446 3432 or 3433**

If you need information in a different format, such as easy read, large print, BSL, braille, email, SMS text or other communication support, please tell your ward or clinic nurse.

The Christie is committed to producing high quality, evidence based information for patients. Our patient information adheres to the principles and quality statements of the Information Standard. If you would like to have details about the sources used please contact **the-christie.patient.information@nhs.net**

For information and advice visit the cancer information centres at Withington, Oldham or Salford. Opening times can vary, please check before making a special journey.



Contact The Christie Hotline for
urgent support and specialist advice
The Christie Hotline: 0161 446 3658
Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week