Numbing Cream for Dialysis Needles

What is EMLA® cream?

- It is a cream applied over the skin of your fistula/graft that causes numbness of the skin surface for a short time, allowing you comfort as your nurse puts in your dialysis needles.
- You can be given a prescription for this by your Vascular Team or Nephrologist.

Potential side effects from using EMLA® cream

- Whitening or redness of the skin
- Slight swelling or puffiness
- Initial burning or itching
- Small red dots or purple spots

How to apply EMLA® cream

- 1 hour before your dialysis, apply but **do not rub in** a thick layer of cream onto clean, dry skin along the entire length of your fistula/graft.
- Wrap clear plastic loosely around your arm so you do not rub any off and tape edges.
- When it is time for dialysis, your nurse will remove the wrap, wipe off the cream and clean your fistula/graft.

Arm images courtesy of the Saskatchewan Health Authority
Emla® cream product image courtesy of emla.ca

Saskatchewan Health Authority

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