

PRESENTATION 1 or 1.5 gram tubes of white semi-transparent gel. Transparent occlusive dressing.	INDICATIONS Where venepuncture may be required in a non urgent situation, in individuals who are believed to have a fear of, or likely to become upset if undergoing venepuncture (usually children, some vulnerable adults or needle phobic adults). Venepuncture includes intravenous injection, cannulation and obtaining venous blood. Time application so that the area is anaesthetised at time of arrival in ED.
ACTIONS Tetracaine 4% cream is a local anaesthetic agent which has properties to allow it to penetrate intact skin, thus providing local anaesthesia to the area of skin with which it has been in contact.	
CAUTIONS Allergy to elastoplast or other adhesive dressing – discuss risk/ benefit with carer.	CONTRA-INDICATIONS DO NOT apply tetracaine in the following circumstances: • the application of tetracaine should not take preference over life saving or any other clinically urgent procedures • if the area being considered for anaesthesia will require venepuncture in less than 15 minutes • known allergy to tetracaine cream, or any of its other constituents • known allergy to the brand of transparent occlusive dressing • if the patient is allergic to other local anaesthetics • if the patient is pregnant or breastfeeding • if the patient is less than one month old • avoid applying to open wounds, broken skin, lips, mouth, eyes, ears, anal, or genital region, mucous membranes.
	SIDE EFFECTS Mild vasodilatation over the treated area is to be expected. Occasionally local irritation may occur.

DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION

Route: Topical – Apply to two sites.

Concentration – Variable.

AGE	DOSE	VOLUME
All ages	1-1.5 gram	1 tube

Apply one tube directly over a vein that looks as if it would support cannulation – the back of the hand usually works well. Do **not** rub the cream in.

Place an occlusive dressing directly over the “blob” of cream, taking care to completely surround the cream to ensure it does not leak out. Repeat the procedure in one similar, alternative site.

REMEMBER to tell the hospital staff the time of application and location when handing the patient over at the hospital.

SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS

Do not leave on for more than an hour.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Although the application of tetracaine may not directly affect the quality of experience that the patient receives from the ambulance service, it is in line with good patient care as the overall pathway of care the patient will receive will be enhanced.

30-40 minutes after application the area will become numb and remain numb for 4-6 hours.

Tetracaine only needs refrigeration if it is unlikely to be used for a considerable time. Stores should be kept refrigerated. Generally speaking, it does not require refrigeration in everyday use.