

# Application of Topical Local Anesthetic Protocol – Frequently Asked Questions

Who is this document intended for? Does this include adults?

This document applies to both adult and pediatric patients provincially and can be used in any unit or area within Alberta Health Services.

What about Neonatal Intensive Care?

This protocol does not apply to the NICU, refer to your NICU's documents for information on use of topical anesthetic.

How much topical local anesthetic can be applied to one site?

Please refer to Appendix A *Topical Local Anesthetic Application Information* of the Protocol for information on dosages per site. See the images below for reference images of example dosages in grams.

Infant: 1 gram Maxiline™



Child: 0.75 gram Ametop™



Youth: 2.5 grams Maxiline™



### Does this mean we have to apply topical anesthetic every time a patient needs a potentially painful skin breaking procedure?

Topical local anesthetic may be used on any patient who meets all of the inclusion criteria and no exclusion criteria as outlined in the protocol.

This protocol does not set out an obligation to apply the topical local anesthetic, but rather it empowers health care professionals to offer topical local anesthetic to patients for decreasing pain and anxiety during or related to painful skin breaking procedures.

### What are some additional methods of pain management?

There are many ways to provide additional pain management techniques – here are a few suggestions.

- Use Comforting position during the procedure
- Babies can be breastfed, or in skin-to-skin positioning. This ideally should begin 5 minutes prior to the painful procedure for maximum effect.
- Distraction during the procedure can be very helpful. Singing, blowing bubbles, or using apps, listening to music, or watching a video on devices can be very helpful.

### Can topical local anesthetic be applied on open wounds, eyebrow, or lip wounds?

The topical anesthetic referred to in this protocol should not be used for open wounds, eyebrow, or lip wounds.

For those who work in Urgent Care Centers or Emergency Departments refer to the *Topical Anesthetic (LET) for Uncomplicated Lacerations* Protocol for indication and direction for the application of LET gel to patients one (1) month of age and older who present with an uncomplicated laceration.

### Can topical local anesthetic be applied for regular insulin injections?

An order from an authorized prescriber is required prior to the application of topical anesthetic for procedural pain related to regular insulin injections.

### Can a topical anesthetic be applied prior to an intramuscular injection?

Topical local anesthetic is recommended to decrease the pain from the needle but please note that the patient may still experience some discomfort related to having fluid injected.

