

Numbing Products

Numbing Products Available in the Community

Numbing products and gels can be a helpful tool to reduce discomfort during a blood collection. Brand names of frequently used products include Ametop™, Maxilene™, and Emla™, and are available in different sizes. These products are typically available for purchase at a pharmacy and may also be prescribed by a physician. These products may not be right for everyone and require special application instructions; be sure to consult with your physician and pharmacist.

Product name	Active ingredient	Size(s)	Approximate price*	Length of time required on skin for best results	Length of time product is effective
Ametop	4% tetracaine	1.5 gram (g)	\$6 - \$10	30-45 minutes	4-6 hours
Maxilene	4% lidocaine	5 g	\$16 - \$18	20-30 minutes	30 minutes
		15 g	\$40 - \$45		
EMLA	2.5% lidocaine/ prilocaine	5 g	\$15 - \$20	1 hour	1-2 hours
		1 g patch (2)	\$10 - \$12		

*Pricing is based on general information from Alberta pharmacies - February 2021. Other similar products may be available.

How to apply

Follow the instructions provided by your pharmacist or physician. Generally, products need to be applied 30-60 minutes before the blood collection.

Where to apply

Generally the numbing product is applied to the arm in what is known as the antecubital area, as shown in the images below. This is the location for most blood collections, however this can change in some circumstances to other areas such as the back of the hand. Laboratory staff can help you determine where to apply the numbing product.



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