

Ref. No: 0585
Date: 12/01/24
Subject: Sodium Nitrite Poisoning

REQUEST

- 1. Are A&E clinicians and nurses employed by the Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust trained to recognise the symptoms of sodium nitrite poisoning?**
- 2. Are A&E clinicians and nurses employed by the Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust trained to treat patients suffering with sodium nitrite poisoning with the antidote methylthioninium chloride commonly called methylene blue?**
- 3. Does the A&E department at the Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust routinely carry the antidote methylthioninium chloride commonly called methylene blue?**

RESPONSE

St Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust and Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust became a single legal entity known as Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust on 1st July 2023, as such parts of the response may be provided in two sections relating to the hospital sites of each of the legacy organisations.

- 1. Are A&E clinicians and nurses employed by the Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust trained to recognise the symptoms of sodium nitrite poisoning?**

St Helens and Knowsley:

Staff are trained to notice sign / symptoms of chemical ingestion, and this would be escalated to searched via Toxbase for specific treatment.

Southport and Ormskirk:

We don't specifically educate clinicians on sodium nitrite poisoning but there is regular education on poisoning. This will include the recognition of patterns, so called toxidromes, and how to access additional help i.e.

Toxbase and the National Poisons Information Service (NPIS) contacts. The pattern here is of low blood pressure and methaemaglobinaemia – sodium nitrite would be one of a number of agents that could cause this pattern.

- 2. Are A&E clinicians and nurses employed by the Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust trained to treat patients suffering with sodium nitrite poisoning with the antidote methylthioninium chloride commonly called methylene blue?**

St Helens and Knowsley:

Toxbase would advise how to treat with this antidote.

Southport and Ormskirk:

We do cover the treatment of methaemaglobinaemia as it is common to a number of poisons and other medical conditions.

- 3. Does the A&E department at the Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust routinely carry the antidote methylthioninium chloride commonly called methylene blue?**

Yes