

Safety

IVIg goes through several steps to make sure it is safe and does not cause infection:

- All people who give blood are screened to find out if they might have an infection or other disease.
- All blood is tested for serious infections, such as the AIDS virus and hepatitis.
- IVIg is treated to kill most viruses and bacteria before it is given to patients.

A family member cannot donate blood specifically for your treatment. IG makes up a very small part of your blood. It takes blood from thousands of donors to make enough IVIg to give you.

How to Prepare for Your Appointment

Start drinking more water and other fluids 1 to 2 days before your infusion is scheduled. Stay away from coffee, soft drinks and alcohol as they can dehydrate the body. Being hydrated may help to decrease side effects like headaches, and may make it easier for your nurse to insert an IV. You may bring a bottle of water with you to your appointment, if you choose.

Prepare healthy snacks the night before to eat during your treatment. Snacks may help avoid a stomach ache or headache.

Some antihistamines like Benadryl® cause drowsiness. Make arrangements for a driver to and from your appointment if this type of medication is taken before, during or after your infusion.

Plan to pay hospital parking costs if you are driving your own vehicle.

If you have any change in your weight, it is important to tell your nurse prior to treatment.

For more information go to:
<https://saskblood.ca/education/patients/>

Notes and questions to ask your health care provider

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Intravenous Immune Globulin (IVIg) Adult Patient and Family Information



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Healthy People, Healthy Saskatchewan

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What is IVIG?

Intravenous immune globulin (IVIG) is a blood product that has been separated from the liquid part in blood (plasma). It is made up of immune globulins (IG), which are called antibodies. Antibodies help protect the body from germs, such as viruses. Antibodies are made by the immune system, which is the part of the body that helps fight infection.

IVIG is given to people who do not make enough antibodies to maintain a healthy immune system. It is also used to treat diseases that happen when the immune system attacks the person's own body. These are called autoimmune disorders.

How Is IVIG Given?

'IV' means the IVIG is given directly into your vein. A hollow needle is put into a vein in your hand or arm. Once it is in the vein, the needle is taken out and what is left in the vein is a very soft flexible tube (like a tiny straw) for the IVIG to flow through. The IV is then attached to a long tube. The IVIG slowly flows into your vein through the tube.

IVIG is a treatment that is given in the hospital or in an outpatient clinic. You will have to sign a consent form agreeing to this treatment.

It usually takes between 2 and 6 hours to give the IVIG, but it may take longer. It is a good idea to bring in a smartphone with ear buds, books or puzzles to keep yourself occupied.

The IVIG may be given all at once or in separate doses on more than 1 day.

Your IVIG is given very slowly at first. The nurse takes your temperature, heart rate, breathing rate, and blood pressure. These are called vital signs. If these stay normal and you do not have any side effects, the nurse gradually increases the flow of the IVIG.

IVIG and Vaccines

If you have had or plan on getting a live virus vaccine (e.g. measles, mumps, rubella, and/or chickenpox) let your doctor know.

Side Effects

In general, IVIG is a safe treatment. Most side effects are mild and easy to control. They do not cause problems that last for a long time. A few patients have more serious side effects, but these are very rare.

Most Common Side Effects of IVIG

- headache
- fast heart rate
- dizziness or feeling light headed
- flushing of face
- nausea or feeling sick to the stomach
- throwing up
- muscle pain or tenderness
- rash or hives
- chills or feeling cold
- fever (temperature equal to or higher than 38.0°C or 100.4 °F).

If you have any side effects, tell your nurse. Side effects can often be reduced or stopped if the IVIG is given slower. Sometimes other medications can help reduce the side effects.

If you have had problems with IVIG before, your doctor may prescribe medication for you before the IVIG is started.

Rare, But Serious Side Effects

A very small number of patients have other, more severe reactions to IVIG. The signs of these reactions are described below. If you notice any of these signs after you have gone home, **seek medical attention immediately, or go to your closest emergency department.**

- severe headache
- anaphylaxis (swelling in the face or neck, chest tightness, trouble breathing, rash or hives)
- neck stiffness
- blurred vision
- extreme fatigue or tiredness
- cannot urinate (pass urine)
- urine is much darker than usual
- pain on the right side just under lower ribs.

Logging IVIG Infusions

You or your caregiver should keep an infusion log for all your IVIG treatments. Your doctor or nurse will give you an IVIG Infusion Logbook and will explain the information you need to record. It is important to log the side effects (if any) that you experience after each infusion so that your doctor can assess how well your IVIG therapy is working.

Remember to bring your IVIG Infusion Logbook with you to all of your appointments and record the details of each infusion session.