



## 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 to Prepare for Your Child's Appointment

1 to 2 days before your child's appointment, make sure they drink plenty of water or other fluids. Stay away from soft drinks and fluids that contain caffeine as they can dehydrate the body. Being hydrated may help to decrease side effects like headaches and may make it easier for your child's nurse to insert an IV. Your child may bring a bottle of water or juice to their appointment with them, if they choose.

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

If your child has any change in weight, it is important to tell your child's nurse prior to treatment.

## Logging IVIG Infusions

Your child's doctor or nurse will give you an *IVIG Infusion Patient Logbook* and will explain the information you need to record. It's important for you to log the side effects (if any) that your child experiences after each infusion. This will help the doctor assess how well your child's IVIG therapy is working. Remember to bring your child's logbook to each appointment.

## How Is IVIG Given?

IV means the IVIG is given directly into your child's vein. A hollow needle is put into a vein in your child's 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 child's vein through the tube.

Inserting an IV involves a needle and is associated with a brief period of pain and discomfort. Your child may continue to feel discomfort at the IV site, but it should not be painful.

Your child may need to stay in the hospital overnight to receive the IVIG or your child may need to come to the hospital just for the day. This depends on how sick your child is. You will be asked to sign a consent form to allow your child to have an IVIG infusion.

It usually takes between 2 and 6 hours to give your child the IVIG, but it may take longer. You should plan to stay all day at the hospital. It is a good idea to bring in a smartphone/tablet with ear buds, books or puzzles to keep your child occupied.

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

## 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.

Some children have side effects when they receive IVIG. Side effects can happen while the IVIG is infusing and can occur for up to 2 days after.

## 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 your child has 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 your child has had problems with IVIG before, your doctor may prescribe medication for your child before the IVIG is started.

## Rare, but Serious Side Effects of IVIG

Very few patients have more severe reactions to IVIG. If you notice any of these signs in your child 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
- inability to urinate (pee)
- urine is much darker than usual
- pain on the right side just under lower ribs