

IVIG *Facts* FOR OUTPATIENTS



What is IVIG?

Intravenous Immune Globulin (IVIG) is a blood product that contains antibodies in a concentrated form. It is made from plasma collected from human blood donors. There are several different brands of IVIG in Canada and they are all similar.

Why am I getting it? What does it do?

IVIG is used to replace antibodies in patients that have lower than normal levels (e.g. Primary Immunodeficiency). These antibodies help to fight infections.

It can also be used to treat other conditions, some in which the body attacks its own tissues or organs (e.g. autoimmune disease).

Ask your doctor to explain your individual treatment with IVIG.

You will be asked to sign a consent for blood transfusion as IVIG is made from blood plasma.

Risks

IVIG is considered to be a safe blood product with a low risk of transmitting disease.

Blood donors are carefully tested before they donate, and during manufacturing IVIG is treated to destroy the viruses that cause HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C.

How is it given?

Your nurse will start an intravenous (IV) line.

IVIG is given through a vein in your arm or hand. It is a clear liquid that usually comes in glass bottles and is given slowly over several hours.

Your nurse will check your vital signs (blood pressure, temperature and pulse) before and during the infusion.

Side effects

Side effects from IVIG usually occur during or up to 24 hours following infusion and tend to be mild and short lived.

Patients who are well hydrated before infusion seem to have fewer side effects.

5-10% of patients experience minor side effects related to the rate of transfusion, these can often be reduced by slowing the rate of infusion and giving medications such as acetaminophen (e.g. Tylenol®) or an antihistamine (e.g. Benadryl®).

Seek immediate, emergency medical attention if you experience:

- Severe headache, eye pain, extreme drowsiness
- Facial and/or tongue swelling
- Difficulty breathing, chest tightness
- Changes in urine colour (red urine, dark coloured urine)
- Intense back pain that is new
- Feeling faint or severe fatigue

It is important to report any of these symptoms to your doctor or nurse.

If symptoms happen after you have returned home your records need to be updated, therefore at your earliest convenience please notify the clinic of any side effects you might experience at home.

Please contact: