

Intravenous Immune Globulin Information



What is Intravenous Immune Globulin?

Intravenous Immune Globulin (IVIG) is a blood product that contains antibodies. It is made from plasma collected from human blood donors.

What does it do?

IVIG is used to replace antibodies in patients that have lower than normal levels. These antibodies help to fight infections.

IVIG can also be used to treat other conditions, such as when the body attacks its own tissues or organs.

How long will it take?

On your first visit, IVIG is given slowly. If you are a new recipient, it may take 6 to 7 hours.

Depending on your body's response to IVIG, the length of time to receive IVIG may shorten on subsequent visits.

How is it given?

It is given through an intravenous line (IV) which is usually placed in the arm or hand.

Is it painful?

IVIG is not painful. Some people may find the placement of the IV catheter uncomfortable.

What do I need to do to prepare?

Discuss your medical history with your doctor. If you have received IVIG in the past, disclose any side effects.

You will have to sign a consent form agreeing to treatment.

On the day of treatment, your nurse will check your blood pressure, pulse, breathing, and temperature. Tell the nurse if you feel unwell.

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



Are there side effects to IVIG?

There can be side effects with any medication or treatment. With IVIG, they can be mild to severe.

Side effects may include:

- Headache
- Feeling cold
- Feeling tired
- Muscle aches
- Fever

To reduce the side effects, you are encouraged to stay extra hydrated the day before and the day of treatment.

How will I feel after?

You may need a day of rest before you feel like your usual self. Talk to your nurse or doctor about any side effects you may experience after IVIG.

Do I need someone with me?

If you will feel more comfortable, you can have someone with you during treatment.

Will I have to pay for the treatment?

No. IVIG is paid for by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Where can I find more information?

Talk to your doctor or nurse about IVIG.
For more information on the Provincial Blood Coordinating Program, visit www.gov.nl.ca/health/bloodservices or contact healthinfo@gov.nl.ca.