

Your Intravenous (IV) Immunoglobulin Therapy at Home

Introduction

Immune Globulin therapy (sometimes also called IV immunoglobulin, or IVIg therapy) is the replacement of a person's natural infection-fighting substances.

To help the person fight infections, the prescriber has ordered a solution of these proteins (called antibodies).

IVIg is given to the patient through a vein. The dose and frequency are determined by your prescriber, based on your response to the medication. In most cases, a home care nurse gives the patient the IVIg infusion over several hours. The nurse will be present for the administration to monitor for side effects.

Possible Side Effects

Most of the side effects that can happen with this therapy are mild, and can be removed by slowing down the solution going into the vein. The more side effects are:

- Headache
- Stomach pain
- Rash
- Chills
- Fever ($>100.5^{\circ}$)

It is important that you let your nurse know if you ever feel any of these side effects during the infusion, or in the days after the infusion is given.

How Will You Know If It Is Helping?

Even if you have all your antibodies replaced by the medicine, you may still be at risk for infections. You should notice a decrease in the severity and how often they occur.

Special Things You Need To Know About Your Immunoglobulin

The medicine and supplies the nurse needs to give the medicine will be delivered to your home. The pharmacy will call you to make sure someone will be home to accept delivery of the medication.

The medication **MUST** be stored correctly. Most of the time the medicine must be put into the refrigerator immediately or the medicine will spoil. Your pharmacist will let you know how to store the medicine until it is used.

The nurse will need a quiet and clean area to work. Please try to keep small children and pets out of that area while the medicine is being given.

A nurse may visit after the medicine is given to take a blood sample. This sample will be tested and the prescriber will know if the medicine has helped by replacing the right number of infection-fighting antibodies.

What Will the Pharmacy Do?

The pharmacy will deliver the medication, and all of the supplies the nurse will use to give the medicine.

The pharmacist will talk to the prescriber often regarding your lab results and overall condition and can help with immunoglobulin therapy selection, and the kind of equipment that works best for you or your loved one.

Your pharmacist will also look at your current medications to make sure there are no potential problems with your medications and the infusion.

Contact your pharmacist or nurse for any questions you may have; a representative is always available to assist you.

Notes