

Your Subcutaneous (SubQ) Immunoglobulin Therapy at Home

Introduction

Immune Globulin therapy (sometimes also called subcutaneous immunoglobulin or "sub-q-Ig" therapy) is the replacement of a person's natural infection-fighting proteins.

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

Usually this solution is given as a slow infusion of the medication under the skin using a small portable pump. The size of the dose given is determined by the prescriber, and depends on the patient's own level of antibodies.

The frequency is determined by your prescriber based on your response to the medication.

In most cases, a home care nurse will teach the patient or caregiver how to use the medication and supplies. The nurse will be present for the first administration to monitor for side effects. The nurse will also be present for a few times to be sure you or your caregiver understand all of the infusion procedures.

Possible Side Effects

Most of the side effects that can happen with this therapy are mild, and can be treated by slowing down the infusion. The more common side effects are:

- Irritation where the drug is infused
- 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 after the solution 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 but you should notice a decrease in their severity and how often they occur.

Special Things You Need to Know About Your Immunoglobulin Therapy

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. 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 periodically 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 patient 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