

What is immune globulin (Ig)?

Immune globulin or Ig is a blood product that comes from plasma of many blood donors. The antibodies in the plasma help fight infections. Your child's care team may order Ig if your child's immune system is not making enough antibodies, or their antibodies are not working as they should.

Why does my child need Ig?

Children who get Ig may have problems with their immune system due to:

- Autoimmune diseases like:
 - Immune thrombocytopenic purpura (ITP).
 - Acute disseminated encephalomyelitis (ADEM).
- Inflammatory disorders like:
 - Kawasaki disease.
 - Multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C).
 - Guillain-Barre syndrome.
- Primary immune deficiencies. The immune system does not make enough antibodies on its own from:
 - Common variable immunodeficiency (CVID).
 - X-linked agammaglobulinemia (XLA).
 - Severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID).
- Secondary immune deficiencies. The immune system is suppressed from:
 - Treatment with chemotherapies.
 - Treatment with immunosuppressant medicines.
- Other rare disorders.

How is Ig given?

Ig is often given as an infusion through a vein (I.V.).

Ig can also be given as an infusion under the skin, called a subcutaneous infusion. This can often be done at home and has less side effects. It may require more frequent infusions.

How often is Ig given?

How often your child needs Ig depends on their condition. They may need Ig for months, years, or even the rest of their life. Talk with the care team about your child's specific needs.

For inflammatory disorders:

- Ig is often given 1 or 2 times until the inflammatory response has slowed down.

For autoimmune diseases or primary or secondary immune deficiencies:

- Ig is often given 1 time a month.
- Sometimes Ig is given at high doses for 2 days.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

Immune globulin (Ig)

What are the side effects?

To help decrease side effects:

- Your child should drink more fluids than normal for 24 hours before the infusion. Water and Pedialyte (or less costly store brand) are the best fluids to drink.
- Your child's care team will often order acetaminophen (Tylenol) or diphenhydramine (Benadryl) before the infusion starts. Medicines can prevent or treat most side effects.

The most common side effects of Ig are:

- Fever
- Headache
- Rash
- Changes in blood pressure
- Chills
- Back or leg pain
- Nausea or vomiting (throwing up)

More serious side effects include:

- Allergic reaction
- Very bad headache or headache that lasts a long time
- Blood clots
- Kidney damage

Tell your child's care team if your child has a history of:

- Headaches or migraines
- Blood clots or clotting disorder
- Problems with how their kidneys work
- Allergic reactions to Ig or other medicines
- Any other health conditions

When should I call the doctor?

Call the doctor or care team if your child has:

- A fever of 101°F or higher 2 days after the infusion.
- A headache not controlled by pain medicines or one that lasts more than 3 days.
- Fatigue, or feels very tired, for more than 3 days.
- Nausea that lasts more than 3 days.
- A rash or hives.
- Very bad leg or arm pain.

When should I call 911?

Call 911 or take your child to the nearest emergency department (ED) **right away** if your child has chest pain or shortness of breath.

What else do I need to know?

Talk with the doctor before your child gets any vaccines while they are getting Ig.

This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.

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