

Intravenous Immunoglobulin Treatment (IVIg)

Pre-consent information

Within Australia, access to intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIg) therapy is funded by governments for a range of medical conditions defined within the Criteria for the Clinical Use of IVIg in Australia (the Criteria).

IVIg is made from plasma donations. The infusions contain a condensed solution of antibodies used to treat a wide range of conditions affecting the immune system. These include conditions where the immune system is under-active or over-active, as well as some inflammatory conditions.

IVIg infusion side effects

Some of the more often reported side effects include:

- > headache
- > nausea (feeling sick)
- > stomach and back pain.

Rarely, these infusions can cause a more serious allergic reaction.

Symptoms include:

- > shortness of breath
- > wheezing
- > tongue/throat swelling
- > chest tightness
- > skin rash
- > dizziness or low blood pressure.

Very rarely and usually in people with other circulation problems, intravenous immunoglobulin may increase the risk of blood clots forming in the circulation that can result in a heart attack, stroke or other vascular problems. Also, in people with conditions that affect kidney function, this may worsen.

Report these or any other symptoms to your doctor or nurse immediately and prior to the commencement of your next infusion.

Blood Tests

Prior to starting IVIg treatments we recommend you have a baseline blood test to check for viruses such as HIV, and hepatitis C and B.

While IVIg products are treated with antiviral processes we still recommend screening for these viruses every 2 years as a precautionary measure while you are being treated.

Reviews

When receiving IVIg treatments it is very important that you are reviewed by your medical specialist regularly to talk about things such as:

- > how the treatment is affecting your health
- > any side effects you may be having
- > dose adjustments that may need to be made to the treatment
- > to ensure ongoing supply of this treatment.

In some circumstances your doctor may stop your infusions to reassess your immune system or to assess how the treatment has affected your health.

For further information please ask your doctor for a copy of the SA Health patient information booklet on 'Immunoglobulin infusions', refer to the National Blood Authority Australia website (below) or speak to your infusion nurse.

This information sheet has been endorsed by the SA ITAG Committee, May 2013.

For more information: Refer to the National Blood Authority's website at:

<https://www.blood.gov.au/clinical-guidance/immunoglobulin-products-clinical-practice>