

Intravenous immunoglobulin

What is intravenous immunoglobulin?

The immune system helps protect the body from germs. In part, fighting infections depends on the body's ability to make immunoglobulins (antibodies). When the immune system cannot produce enough antibodies, intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIG) may be needed to help boost the immune system. It is given by IV (into the vein).

IVIG is made from blood plasma (the liquid part of the blood). It requires hundreds of donors to make one dose, so donating for your child is not possible. When IVIG is made, many steps are taken to remove any harmful viruses.

One dose of IVIG protects your child for about 3 to 4 weeks. How often your child needs IVIG depends on his or her condition.

What happens during the infusion?

An IV will be started. Anesthetic cream such as EMLA® or ELA-Max® may be used to ease the discomfort of the IV. (See the education sheet "Anesthetic cream.")

Nurses will monitor your child closely. Sometimes a reaction (fever, headache, or body aches, rash, hives, trouble breathing) can occur during the infusion. Usually slowing the infusion rate makes it go away. Sometimes medicines are given before or during the infusion to prevent or lessen reactions. Severe reactions are rare.

How should I care for my child after the infusion?

Side effects such as mild flu-like symptoms, headache, nausea (upset stomach), and vomiting (throwing up) are possible for a few days after an infusion. Medicines can be given for these. If your child has any body aches or fever, give acetaminophen or ibuprofen as directed (see charts on page 2).

No change is needed in your child's diet or activity after receiving IVIG. However, good nutrition and rest are **always** important for children with immune problems. Eating proteins such as meat or chicken and foods high in zinc are especially helpful to the immune system.

Try to avoid others who have respiratory infections (colds), stomach flu, or other infections.

Make an appointment to see your child's doctor as directed. If needed, call the clinic to schedule any future infusions.

When should I call the clinic?

- leg aches, backaches, muscle spasms
- headache
- nausea, vomiting
- rash
- small blood blisters
- flushing (red, warm face)
- fever or chills
- very tired
- dizziness
- wheezing
- trouble breathing - **call 911**

What else do I need to know?

Be sure to keep up with your child's vaccines, including a yearly influenza vaccine. Tell the primary doctor or nurse practitioner your child received IVIG. It will affect live vaccines.

The following medicines can be given to reduce fever and increase comfort. Check with your doctor about which to use. Give the amount based on **weight** if possible. If you do not have a scale, give the amount based on age. **Note:** 1 teaspoon = 5 ml.

Acetaminophen (Tylenol® or another brand)

Give every 4 to 6 hours as needed. (Also available in suppositories; use the same number of mg.)

Weight in pounds (lbs.)	Age	Drops 1 dropperful = 80 mg (0.8 ml)	Elixir 1 teaspoon = 160 mg	Chewable 1 tablet = 80 mg	Jr. strength 1 caplet = 160 mg	Reg. strength 1 tablet = 325mg
6-11 lbs.	0-3 months	½ dropper (0.4 ml)	-----	-----	-----	
12-17 lbs.	4-11 months	1 dropper (0.8 ml)	½ teaspoon	-----	-----	
18-23 lbs.	12-23 months	1½ droppers (1.2 ml)	¾ teaspoon	-----	-----	
24-35 lbs.	2-3 years	2 droppers (1.6 ml)	1 teaspoon	2 tablets	-----	
36-47 lbs.	4-5 years	-----	1½ teaspoons	3 tablets	-----	
48-59 lbs.	6-8 years		2 teaspoons	4 tablets	2 caplets	1 tablet
60-71 lbs.	9-10 years	-----	2½ teaspoons	5 tablets	2½ caplets	1 tablet
72-95 lbs.	11 years	-----	3 teaspoons	6 tablets	3 caplets	1½ tablets
96+ lbs.	12-14 years	-----	-----	-----	4 caplets	2 tablets

Ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®, or another brand)

Give every 6 to 8 hours as needed; **always** with food. Other strengths available by prescription.

Weight in pounds (lbs)	Age	Dose	Liquid 1 teaspoon = 100 mg	Chewable Tablets 1 tablet = 100 mg	Tablets 1 tablet = 200 mg
11-21 lbs.	6-12 months	50 mg	½ teaspoon	½ tablet	
22-32 lbs.	1-2 years	100 mg	1 teaspoon	1 tablet	
33-43 lbs.	3-5 years	150 mg	1½ teaspoons	1 ½ tablets	
44-54 lbs.	6-8 years	200 mg	2 teaspoons	2 tablets	1 tablet
55-65 lbs.	9-10 years	250 mg	2½ teaspoons	2 ½ tablets	
66-87 lbs.	11 years	300 mg	3 teaspoons	3 tablets	1½ tablets
88+ lbs.	12 and older	400 mg	4 teaspoons	4 tablets	2 tablets

Questions?

This sheet is not specific to your child, but provides general information. If you have any questions, please call the clinic. For more information about immune globulin, refer to the Immune Deficiency Foundation Patient and Family Handbook at www.primaryimmune.org.