

For patients with primary immunodeficiency (PI)  
who require immune globulin therapy



## What to Know About Immune Globulin (IG) Therapy

This guide is designed to provide information  
to help you prepare for your conversations with  
your healthcare provider.



# What to Know About Starting IG Treatment

Here are some topics your healthcare provider may discuss with you. You can review this before your visit and make notes of anything you want to bring up.

## WHAT IS IG THERAPY?

IG stands for immune globulin. IG is comprised of proteins taken from human plasma and contains purified antibodies.



**Plasma is the liquid part of the blood that contains antibodies needed to keep the body healthy.**

IG replacement therapy is given to some people with PI to help the immune system protect them from bacteria and viruses.

## WHY IS IG PRESCRIBED FOR PI?

IG replacement therapy is one of the standards of care for PI disorders that affect antibody production. IG therapy has been shown to help diminish the risk of infection, and it plays a vital role in the lives of many people with PI.

### Notes:

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**HOW IS IG GIVEN?**

IG can be given by intravenous (in the vein) infusion (IVIG) or subcutaneous (under the skin) infusion (SCIG).

<b>IVIG</b>	<b>SCIG</b>
Infused through a vein, typically in the arm	Infused just below the skin, into the subcutaneous tissue. Typical sites include the hips, abdomen, or thighs
Administered by a healthcare professional in various settings, including an infusion center, physician office, or at home	Self-administered conveniently at home or wherever you are (work, travel, etc)
Length of infusion varies	Infusions are shorter
Infusions occur less frequently (every 3 to 4 weeks)	Infusions occur more frequently (from daily up to biweekly)

**Which option works best for my lifestyle?**

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## **IG THERAPY COST AND INSURANCE**

The cost of IG therapy may depend on your dose and how it is administered (intravenous vs subcutaneous). To cover IG therapy, most insurance companies require prior authorization. Your healthcare provider or specialty pharmacy will submit documentation to request prior authorization. IG manufacturers may offer assistance for eligible patients.

### **My insurance questions:**

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## **DIFFERENT IG PRODUCTS AVAILABLE**

There are several IG products available in the US, which vary in a number of ways. It's important to keep your provider informed about your infusion experience, lifestyle, and preferences. If you have issues tolerating a product or need a more flexible option, a switch to a different product, route, or regimen is possible.

### **My questions about IG product choices:**

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Partner with your provider to find the product, route, and regimen that is right for you. Your needs may change over time and you are your best advocate.



## Questions Your Healthcare Provider May Ask After Starting Treatment

Once you start treatment with IG, your healthcare provider will work with you to ensure you get the most from treatment. Here are some common questions your provider may ask. You can review these prior to your next visit to feel prepared to have a good conversation.

### **HOW IS YOUR IG TREATMENT GOING OVERALL?**

Your provider may ask this to check on your experience with treatment. It's important to tell them about any challenges or concerns you may be experiencing, including:

- Recent cold or other infection
- Prescribed antibiotic therapy
- Missed school, work, or family activities due to illness
- Unplanned hospital or physician visits
- Any problems or issues with infusions

Your healthcare team can help you manage the issues so you can have the best possible infusion experience.

#### **My experience:**

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## ARE YOU MISSING ANY INFUSIONS?

It is important to discuss the reason why you may have missed an infusion. The goal of IG therapy is to provide protection from infection. Making sure you get your infusions is critical to achieving this goal. Your healthcare provider can help you address barriers to therapy appropriately.

### My infusion challenges:

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## ARE YOU HAVING ANY DIFFICULTIES WITH IG THERAPY ADMINISTRATION?

Sometimes you can have issues with how your therapy is given. Let your provider know if you're experiencing any of the following:

- **IVIG:**
  - Difficulty scheduling infusion appointments due to work, school, or other commitments
  - Difficulty accessing veins
  - Persistent side effects with IVIG
- **SCIG:**
  - Problems with infusions, such as discomfort or number of needles
  - Too long of an infusion time
  - Difficulty using infusion pump
  - Difficulty using ancillary supplies



Circle any issues you want to discuss with your provider

## DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT SPECIALTY PHARMACY?

If you receive your IG through a specialty pharmacy, let your provider know if you are having any issues with:

- Obtaining IG product and/or supplies
- Coordinating infusion appointments

### My Specialty Pharmacy

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WOULD WANT TO CHANGE ABOUT YOUR TREATMENT PLAN?

You are a partner in your care. Share things with your provider that you may want to consider changing, including:

- Switching the administration from intravenous to subcutaneous, or vice versa
- Dosing interval (time between your infusions)
- Length or duration of infusion
- Number of needles
- Site of care (home, infusion clinic, or hospital)
- Temporary changes for a short-term situation such as travel, class schedules, or medical procedures



## ARE YOU EXPERIENCING ANY SIDE EFFECTS?

Side effects can occur, especially when first starting IG therapy, changing IG brands, or if you have an active infection or preexisting condition. Fortunately, most of these side effects are mild and of short duration.

It is important to speak with your healthcare provider about any side effects you experience. Your provider can help you find a regimen that works for you.

Below are possible side effects most commonly reported by patients infusing IG.

### IVIG

headache, fatigue, nausea, changes in blood pressure, muscle aches, joint stiffness, hives, itching, rash, low-grade fever, chills, chest discomfort, and increased heart rate

### SCIG

localized itching, rash, swelling, redness, leaking, bruising, nodules, warmth, burning, and pain; headache, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea



**Circle any  
you want  
to discuss  
with your  
provider**







## What to Do Next

Remember that your provider is your partner in your care and is available to help you work through issues and challenges. Here's what you can do:

- Keep track of your infusions, improvements, and challenges
- Share what you track with your provider at each visit
- Reach out with questions between visits to continue the conversation



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