

Having intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIg) therapy to treat your immune disorder

Department of Immunology

Information for Patients

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Introduction

This leaflet aims to answer your questions about having intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIg) to treat your immunodeficiency.

If you have any questions or concerns please speak to the doctor or nurse caring for you.

What is IVIg?

Immunoglobulin replacement therapy is a blood-based treatment. The immunoglobulin contains antibodies that help to fight infection. It is usually given as an infusion into a vein (intravenous infusion) which is called IVIg. Your doctor has recommended this treatment because it has been found that your immune system is not making antibodies.

How is IVIg given?

It is given as an infusion into a vein in your arm through a small needle (cannula) every 3 weeks. Treatment will take place on a ward. It will be done by medical staff. The infusion will take several hours as the infusion has to be given slowly. On your first visit, before your infusion, you will need to have some tests to check your blood pressure, pulse, temperature, amount of oxygen in your blood (oxygen saturation) and blood test.

If you have no problems during the first hour of the infusion, the rate will be increased by the specialist nurse. When it has finished, after your first infusion only, you will need to stay on the ward for 1 hour so staff can observe you to check for any side effects. Thereafter you can leave.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

Will I feel any pain?

You may feel some discomfort when the needle is placed in a vein in your arm. This should only last for a few seconds and it will wear off. If you continue to feel discomfort or any swelling around the cannula please tell your nurse.

Are there any side effects or risks?

Although side effects or adverse reactions are rare they may still occur. These may include nausea, chills, chest pain and headaches. If you experience any symptoms during the infusion, it will be slowed down or stopped. The symptoms usually settle quickly.

You will be monitored while you are having treatment, but you should report any new symptoms during or after the infusion to the nursing team.

The immunoglobulin is manufactured from a large amount of blood and goes through different stages of preparation to detect and inactivate viruses such as hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV. However, there is still a small risk that blood borne infection such as hepatitis, and others which have not yet been discovered, may be transmitted through treatment. It is important that this small risk is weighed against the benefits of treatment for you.

What happens if I'm unwell on the day of infusion?

If you have an infection, extra care with IVIg treatment is needed because the risk of having a reaction increases.

It is important that you **do not** come to the hospital for your infusion if you have a temperature above 37.5°C, diarrhoea and vomiting or if you have started antibiotics less than 48 hours before your appointment.

Please contact the specialist nurse if you need further advice, or to tell us if you cannot attend.

Where will I have the IVIg?

Your intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIg) will be given on Ward 1, Day Case Unit, at Leicester General Hospital.

What kind of follow-up will I have for a review?

We aim to give you a follow-up appointment for a review about every 4 to 6 months, where you will be seen by the doctor. This will be when you attend for your infusion on Ward 1, Day Case Unit, at Leicester General Hospital. The appointment will be made for you by the nursing team.

Contact details

Specialist Nurse / Clinical Immunologist Consultant:

Telephone: 0116 258 6702 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm)

Further information

Primary Immunodeficiency UK (PID UK)

199A Victoria Street, London SW1E 5NE

PID UK produce a number of useful leaflets about all aspects of primary immunodeficiency:

Website: www.piduk.org

Email: hello@piduk.org

Telephone: 0800 987 8986

For more advice and support, visit the NHS website: www.nhs.uk or call the helpline on 111 for non-emergency medical advice.

