



Immunoglobulin

(IG or Immune Globulin or Gamma Globulin)

IgG is pooled/plasma containing antibodies against a number of diseases like measles, rubella, varicella, hepatitis A, etc.

It is given in the following situations:

- For passive protection against rubella, measles, chicken pox after exposure in high risk populations e.g. immunocompromised, pregnancy, less than one year of age.
- For protection against Hepatitis A after exposure. It must be given within two weeks of exposure and should be given concurrently with Hepatitis A to develop active immunity. A second dose of Hepatitis A is required six months later.
- For those traveling to high risk countries who do not have time to develop active immunity before departure (less than four weeks). It should be given concurrently with the first dose of Hepatitis A. A second dose is due six months later.

IG is prepared from pooled plasma through purification and sterilization. It is recommended that travelers take the Hepatitis A vaccine if time permits. IG should be used during pregnancy only when clearly needed.

Side effects after receiving IG may include: muscle stiffness, redness, warmth, pain and tenderness at injection site. Fever, chills, headache, weakness and nausea may occur. If these symptoms continue beyond 48 hours or become bothersome, contact your physician. If skin rash, swelling of hands/feet or face, or trouble breathing develop, contact your doctor immediately.

IG may interfere with the immune response to live vaccines, so discuss this with your physician before taking it. If you take IG, you will not be able to donate blood for several months.

Individuals who have had Hepatitis A disease or who have completed the series of Hepatitis A vaccine have lifetime immunity and do not require IG.

A frequently asked question concerns the difference between IG, which is a passive form of protection, and a vaccine such as Hepatitis A vaccine. IG is manufactured from “antibodies” and comes from another person’s donated plasma. It’s called “passive” because the body of the person receiving IG does not react to the IG but simply circulates it. Thus the recipient is given instant protection. Over a few months, this protection disappears. A vaccine or immunization, or “active” form of protection, stimulates the recipient’s immune system to build its own antibodies. The body retains the pattern so that more can be built in the future. This type of response to a vaccine may last several months to a lifetime.

If you are a registered University of Illinois student and you have questions or concerns, or need to make an appointment, please call: **Dial-A-Nurse at 333-2700**

If you are concerned about any difference in your treatment plan and the information in this handout, you are advised to contact your health care provider.

Visit the McKinley Health Center Web site at: <http://www.mckinley.uiuc.edu>