

8mg (two x 4mg tablets) and paracetamol one gram (two x500mg tablets).

3. Sit quietly, do not try and move around suddenly or stand up.
4. Let your infusion/injection partner or the immunology team know you are feeling unwell.

Severe reactions

In some cases, the patient may experience severe reactions, however this is exceptionally rare.

Symptoms include:

- Tightness in the chest
- Wheeze in the chest
- Drowsiness
- Collapse or faint

If you experience these severe symptoms you should:

Instructions for you:

1. Stop the infusion
2. Dial 999 for an ambulance

Instructions for your partner:

1. Stop the infusion/injection
2. Lay the person down slowly and place on their side in the recovery position
3. Dial 999 for an ambulance
4. Keep all the bottles of the immunoglobulin and report to the immunology team

Contact for help or advice:

Immunology Clinical Nurse Specialist
contact number 0121 371 4850



The Trust provides free monthly health talks on a variety of medical conditions and treatments. For more information visit www.uhb.nhs.uk/health-talks.htm or call 0121 371 4323.

Immunology Department
Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham
Mindelsohn Way, Edgbaston
Birmingham, B15 2GW
Telephone: 0121 627 2000

PI17/1562/02 Author: Emma Knight
Date: February 2018 Review date: February 2020



Subcutaneous immunoglobulin injections or infusions at home:

A patient guide to coping
with side effects and
reactions

UHB is a no smoking Trust

To see all of our current
patient information leaflets please visit
www.uhb.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets.htm

Immunoglobulin (antibodies in the blood) can be safely given at home. Very few moderate or severe reactions have ever been reported in patients undertaking subcutaneous treatment (administered underneath the skin).

There are some simple measures you can take to reduce the likelihood of reactions and to treat any reactions that occur. If you are not sure, always seek medical advice from your immunology team or GP.

How to avoid adverse reactions

Never infuse or inject if you have signs of an untreated infection; for example a fever.

Only infuse or inject when you have started taking antibiotics to treat the infection and are feeling better.

If you are unsure as to whether you have fully recovered from your infection you should delay your infusion or injection. It is better for you to delay your immunoglobulin dose than to have a reaction. It is recommended that you wait 48 hours after starting a course of antibiotics to infuse or inject.

Do not infuse or inject when you are in a rush – mistakes are more likely to happen.

Always keep a supply of paracetamol and antihistamines (medication to treat reactions) at home.

What to do in the event of a reaction?

Mild reactions

You may experience the following mild reactions to your subcutaneous treatment:

- Swelling around the infusion/ injection site
- Redness or a rash around the infusion/injection site
- Tenderness around the infusion/ injection site
- Mild headaches
- General muscle aches all over the body

To help calm these reactions you should do the following:

1. Slow down the infusion rate on your pump, or the rate you are injecting, or stop the injection / infusion all together.

2. Take two paracetamol 500mg tablets.
3. If there is abnormal swelling or pain at the infusion/injection site, the needle will need to be re-sited. Throw away the original needle using a sharps container and re insert using a new needle.
4. Restart the injection/infusion when symptoms pass and complete the treatment.
5. If your symptoms persist, stop your infusion or injection and look for signs of infection (check for a high temperature).

Moderate reactions

Moderate reactions to your immunoglobulin treatment may include:

- Marked (noticeable) and increasing swelling and pain at the infusion/ injection site
- Light-headedness and dizziness
- Flu like symptoms such as going from very hot to very cold
- Severe joint and muscle ache
- Fever

To help ease these symptoms you should:

1. Stop the infusion or injection.
2. Take antihistamines such as Piriton