



# GUILLAIN BARRÉ SYNDROME



## IVI<sub>2</sub>G in the treatment of Acute and Chronic Neuropathies

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or nurse or contact the Group's National Co-ordinator.

# IVIg

## Notes

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**The GBS Support Group is a registered charity and receives no government funding. If you have found this guide helpful and would like to help us to continue publishing copies for others affected by GBS and associated inflammatory neuropathies, please consider making a donation to us. Secure donations can be made online – see our website for details. Alternatively you can request a form from the Secretary.**

**What is Intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIg)?**

**Information for patients and carers**

This leaflet has been written for patients and carers to provide some basic information about Intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIg) and its use in the treatment of acute and chronic neuropathies. Your medical team or consultant will be happy to discuss any questions you may have.

Intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIg) is made from the 'plasma' of donated human blood. 'Plasma' is the clear fluid part of the blood. This blood is donated by many different people.

**Some important information about IVIg**

IVIg is a useful treatment in many different neuropathies including Guillain-Barre syndrome, Chronic Inflammatory Demyelinating Polyradiculoneuropathy (CIDP) and Multifocal Motor Neuropathy (MMN).

IVIg is now an accepted treatment for these conditions in NZ as well as in most European countries and the United States.

**How is IVIg given?**

Currently IVIg is usually given in hospital, in a day care unit. It is given through a drip and the rate, dose and time are calculated individually for each patient. If the treatment is successful it may have to be given on repeated occasions.

**Are there any side effects of IVIg ?**

As with all treatments, side effects can occur with IVIg, although usually these are minimal and do not require the treatment to be stopped.

Transient side effects, which often respond to changes in the rate of administration of the infusion, include headache and low blood pressure.

More rarely, a rash can develop. IVIg thickens the blood slightly so particular consideration of its use is given to patients with kidney failure, previous heart disease, strokes or blood clots. Very rarely these severe complications can result from IVIg use.

**What are the risks of IVIg?**

IVIg is a blood product and therefore there is a theoretical risk of infections being transmitted from the donors of the blood. In practice, the blood from which IVIg is made is screened for all known infections such as hepatitis viruses and AIDS and these cannot survive the many purification steps. In addition, IVIg is very highly purified to reduce the risk of infection with any other agent to a minimum.

**Will I have to give my consent for treatment?**

Before this treatment is given to you, the doctor will explain the implications and ask you if you understand what has been said and if you agree to have the treatment.

If you have any questions or concerns about your treatment with IVIg please ask your doctor