

Hepatitis B Immune Globulin

Vaccines and immune globulins have saved more lives compared to any other medical intervention. They help the immune system recognize and fight bacteria and viruses that cause serious diseases.

What is hepatitis B immune globulin?

Hepatitis B (HB) immune globulin has large amounts of HB antibodies taken from donated human blood. Antibodies are proteins that a person's immune system makes to fight viruses or bacteria.

HB immune globulin provides immediate, short-term protection against the HB virus. It can prevent the disease or make the disease less severe. HB immune globulin works best if given:

- Within 48 hours after exposure to the HB virus; or
- Within 14 days of sexual contact with an infected individual.

Is HB immune globulin safe?

Yes, HB immune globulin is a very safe human blood product. Donors are screened and blood and plasma are tested at every donation. Since screening and testing began by Canadian Blood Services in 1998, there have been no reports of blood-borne infections like HIV or hepatitis C in persons receiving HB immune globulin.

Who should get HB immune globulin?

If you or your child have potentially been exposed to the HB virus, and have not received the HB vaccine in the past, you may be advised to get HB immune globulin especially for:

- People who had unprotected sex with a person who has HB infection.
- Sexual assault victims.
- Infants whose mothers have HB.
- Infants whose mothers are at high risk of infection with HB, such as intravenous drug users or sex trade workers.
- People who have been exposed to blood and body fluids of a known or suspected HB positive individual.

Exposures to blood and body fluids may include:

- Being poked with an infected needle.
- Being splashed in the mouth, nose or eyes.
- Biting or being bitten by someone with HB.
- Being in contact with personal articles such as razors, toothbrushes and dental floss.
- Using equipment for tattooing, piercings, acupuncture or needles used to inject drugs and other substances (e.g. steroids).

A dose of HB vaccine may be given at the same time as HB immune globulin. More doses of HB vaccine may be given later to provide full, long-term protection against HB. Contact your doctor, nurse practitioner or public health nurse for information.

Who should not get HB immune globulin?

- People who had a life-threatening reaction to a previous dose of an immune globulin product, or any components of the product.
- Persons who are deficient in IgA as they may have the potential to develop IgA antibodies and have an anaphylactic reaction. Physician consultation is required.
- **Note: Immune globulin can interfere with some vaccines.** Speak with a public health nurse, nurse practitioner or physician if you have been vaccinated for measles, mumps, rubella, chickenpox or other live vaccines within the past 14 days or if you receive these vaccines in the future.

What are common reactions to HB immune globulin?

- Temporary pain, swelling, tenderness and hives where the needles was given
- Headache.
- Fever and diarrhea in infants.
- Rarely, blot clots may occur after the administration of HB immune globulin.

- Only treat a fever (at least 6 to 8 hours after immunization) if you / your child are uncomfortable and not sleeping.

Use **Acetaminophen** (all ages; Tylenol®, Tempra®) or **Ibuprofen (6 months & older;** Advil®, Motrin®) to treat fevers and pain. **Never give ASA** (Aspirin®) to children younger than 18 years old because of the serious risk of Reye's syndrome.

It is important to stay in the clinic for 15 minutes after getting HB immune globulin because there is an extremely rare possibility of a life-threatening allergic reaction called anaphylaxis. This may include hives, difficulty breathing, or swelling of the throat, tongue or lips. This reaction can be treated, and occurs in less than one in one million people who get the HB immune globulin. **If this happens after you leave the clinic, get medical attention or call 911 right away.**

Who should you report reactions to?

- Report any adverse or unexpected reactions to your local public health nurse, your doctor, nurse practitioner or 811 as soon as possible.

Talk to a public health nurse:

- If you have questions or concerns about you or your child's reaction to an immunization.
- If you or your child had to go to a doctor, a hospital or to a health centre with a symptom that might be related to immunization.

What does HB immune globulin contain?

HepaGam B® containing human plasma protein, maltose, polysorbate 80, may contain traces of tri-n-butyl phosphate and Triton X-100. Preservative-free.

HyperHEP B® contains human hepatitis B hyperimmune globulin and glycine. Preservative-free. Prefilled syringes have rubber needle shields and stoppers.

Mature Minor Consent

It is recommended that parents/guardians discuss consent for treatment with their children. Efforts are first made to get parental/guardian consent for treatment. However, children at least 13 years of age up to and including 17 years of age, who are able to understand the benefits and possible reactions for each product and the risks of not getting treatment, can legally consent to or refuse treatment in Saskatchewan by providing mature minor informed consent to a healthcare provider.

Provincial immunization fact sheets are available at www.saskatchewan.ca/immunize.

For more information, contact your local public health office, your physician, nurse practitioner, HealthLine online or by calling 811.

References: [Canadian Immunization Guide](#). Product monographs (HepaGam B® 2022; HyperHEP B® 2021).