



Information for Recipients of Rh Immune Globulin

What is Rh Immune Globulin (RHIG)?

Rh immune globulin is a blood product recommended whenever there is a chance of an Rh negative woman forming antibodies. This could happen with:

- Pregnancy
- A miscarriage
- An abortion
- An amniocentesis or chorionic villous sampling (CVS)
- A trauma (e.g., a car accident while pregnant)
- A transfusion
- Any other type of risk

What does it mean to be Rh negative?

There are four different blood types (A, B, AB, and O). There is also an antigen called the Rh factor. If you have the Rh factor on your cells, you are Rh positive. If you don't have the Rh factor on your cells, you are Rh negative.

Being Rh negative has no effect on general health, but can cause problems during pregnancy.

How does being Rh negative affect pregnancy?

People who are Rh negative can make antibodies if exposed to Rh positive blood. This can happen with a blood transfusion or during pregnancy.

If a woman is pregnant, some of the baby's blood can come in contact with the mother (this is normal). If this happens antibodies can form. Antibodies are proteins the body makes to protect itself when it reacts with something that is foreign.

If a woman is pregnant and Rh negative and her partner is Rh positive, she is at risk for making Rh antibodies.

What can happen to my baby if I have Rh antibodies?

If you are pregnant and Rh negative and your baby is Rh positive, antibodies can form.

Antibodies can cross the placenta and cause a very bad problem for your baby, which is called hemolytic disease of the newborn (HDN). HDN can cause:

- Low hemoglobin (anemia)
- Toxins in the blood (jaundice)
- Brain damage
- Death

What can I do to lower the risk of HDN?

HDN can be prevented in 99.9% of Rh negative women with injections of RhIG

When is RhIG given?

This is administered at 28- 30 weeks and when you deliver, if your baby is Rh positive.

Do I need RhIG every time I get pregnant?

RhIG is recommended with each pregnancy. It will help protect your baby and any future pregnancies.

Once your body makes antibodies they do not go away. Every time you get pregnant the risk to your baby is more serious.

What are the risks of RhIG?

RhIG is a blood product. All donors are tested for viruses and the product is filtered and treated to kill viruses.

What are the side effects of RhIG?

Most people who get RhIG have no side effects. Rarely RhIG can cause:

- Pain at injection site
- Fever (temperature over 38.5 degrees Celsius)
- Feeling weak and unwell
- A headache
- An allergic reaction (e.g., hives), which is usually not bad and goes away quickly

Is there any other way to prevent HDN?

RhIG is the only way to prevent HDN caused by the Rh factor. If you have any questions or concerns, talk to your doctor or healthcare provider.

What to do if a reaction occurs.

If you begin to feel mildly unwell after your infusion and are not sure what to do you should call your health care provider or

Health Links- Info Santé at (204) 788-8200 or Toll Free 1-888-315-9257.

For your records

Blood product name: _____

Dose administered: _____

Administration date: _____

Prescribing Physician: _____

