Intravenous Immunoglobulin (IVIG)

What is intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIG)?
IVIG is a collection of antibodies from the plasma (part of the blood) of thousands of different donors. Antibodies help the body fight infection. IVIG is available under many brand names, such as Gamunex®, IGIVnex®, Gammagard® Liquid IVIG 10%, and others.

How is IVIG given?
IVIG is given through a tube in your arm that goes directly into a vein.

What are the benefits?
• This medication is useful for some people who have weak immune systems. IVIG helps the body fight infections when your own antibodies are not doing their job well enough.
• It is also given in some autoimmune diseases to prevent your immune system from attacking the body’s normal tissues.

What are the side effects?
• Using this medication may cause a headache, fatigue (tiredness), fever, chills, skin rash, fast heart rate, nausea (feeling sick to your stomach), or vomiting (throwing up). Your doctor may prescribe medication to prevent or treat these side effects.
• Uncommon or rare side effects may include kidney failure, a blood clot in a vein, low blood counts, or aseptic meningitis (inflammation of the covering of the brain).
• IVIG is carefully prepared so that it does not have any viruses or other germs. The risk of infection from IVIG treatment is extremely low.