Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

About Subcutaneous Immunoglobulin (Hizentra®)

This information explains what Hizentra (hi-ZEN-trah) is and answers some commonly asked questions. It also explains guidelines to follow while you're taking it, and side effects to look out for.

What is Hizentra?

Hizentra is a medicine used to treat diseases or problems that affect your immune system. It's a type of medicine called a subcutaneous immunoglobulin (SUB-kyoo-TAY-nee-us IH-myoo-noh-GLAH-byoo-lin), or SQ IgG.

- **Subcutaneous** means "under the skin." You give yourself Hizentra by using a small needle and pump to infuse (slowly push) the medicine under your skin.
- An **immunoglobulin** is another name for an antibody (a protein your immune system makes). Antibodies help your body fight off infections and diseases. Hizentra gives your immune system antibodies to help it work better.

Your healthcare provider may prescribe Hizentra if you have:

- A weak immune system. This means your body has a hard time fighting off infections and diseases because:
  - Your immune system is not making enough antibodies.
  - Your antibodies are not working like they should.
- An autoimmune disease. This is when your body attacks its own healthy tissues and organs by mistake.

What does Hizentra do?

Hizentra can help prevent infections or make them less severe (not as bad) if you have:

- A weak immune system.
- Hepatitis A.
- Measles.
- Chickenpox.
- Rubella (also called German measles).

Hizentra also can help treat some autoimmune diseases, such as:

- **Immune thrombocytopenia (THROM-boh-sy-toh-PEE-nee-uh), or ITP.** This is when your immune system

attacks platelets (blood cells that help form clots and control bleeding). ITP can make you bruise easily and bleed more than normal if you have a cut or an injury.

- **Chronic inflammatory demyelinating polyneuropathy (dee-MY-eh-lin-AY-ting PAH-lee-noor-AH-puh-thee), or CIDP.** This is when your immune system attacks myelin (the protective covering around your nerves). CIDP can cause nerve damage and inflammation (swelling). This leads to changes in sensations (how you feel), such as numbness or tingling, and to muscle weakness.

Your healthcare provider may prescribe Hizentra for other health issues not listed here. Talk with them if you have any questions about why they're prescribing Hizentra for you.

Who should not take Hizentra?

Do not take Hizentra if:

- You're allergic to Hizentra.
- You're allergic to any ingredients that make up Hizentra, such as polysorbate (PAH-lee-SOR-bayt) 80. This is a common ingredient found in medicines, cosmetics, and food products.
- You have hyperprolinemia (HY-per-PROH-lih-NEE-mee-uh). This is when your body has problems breaking down an amino acid called proline. Taking Hizentra can

be harmful because proline is one of its ingredients.

What must I tell my healthcare provider before I start taking Hizentra?

- **If you have any allergies, including allergies to medicine or food.** You should also tell your healthcare provider what symptoms you have during an allergic reaction.
- **If you're breastfeeding, pregnant, or plan to become pregnant.** Talk with your healthcare provider about whether it's safe to take Hizentra. They'll tell you about the benefits and risks to you and your baby.
- **If you plan on getting a vaccine.** Vaccines may not work as well as they should while you're taking Hizentra.
- **If you take any medicines.** This includes prescription and over-the-counter medicines, dietary supplements (such as herbs, vitamins, or home remedies), patches, and creams.
    - Ask your healthcare provider if it's safe to take Hizentra with your medicines. Some medicines can interact (mix) with each other and cause problems.
    - **Do not start, stop, or change the dose (amount) of any medicine without talking with your healthcare provider.**

How do I take Hizentra?

You'll give yourself Hizentra as a subcutaneous infusion. A subcutaneous infusion delivers medicine into the fatty tissue right under your skin, where it gets absorbed into your body.

You'll use a small device called an infusion pump to give yourself Hizentra. The pump slowly sends the medicine through a thin tube that's attached to a small needle. You'll put the needle into your skin at a place on your body called an infusion site.

Your home infusion nurse will teach you how to give yourself the infusion safely at home. They'll help you practice until you're comfortable doing it on your own.

You can also find infusion instructions on Hizentra's website. Visit www.hizentra.com to download written instructions or watch a video.

The infusion takes about 1 to 2 hours. You can relax or do calming activities during this time, such as reading a book or watching TV.

How do I choose an infusion site?

Choose an infusion site where there's enough skin to pinch. It's best to use one of these areas (see Figure 1):

- The front part of your upper arms.
- Your abdomen (belly), except for the 2-inch (5-centimeter) area around your belly button.
- The middle front or middle outside of your thighs.
- The upper area of your buttocks (butt), only if someone else is putting the needle into your skin.
- The back part of your upper arms, only if someone else is putting the needle into your skin.

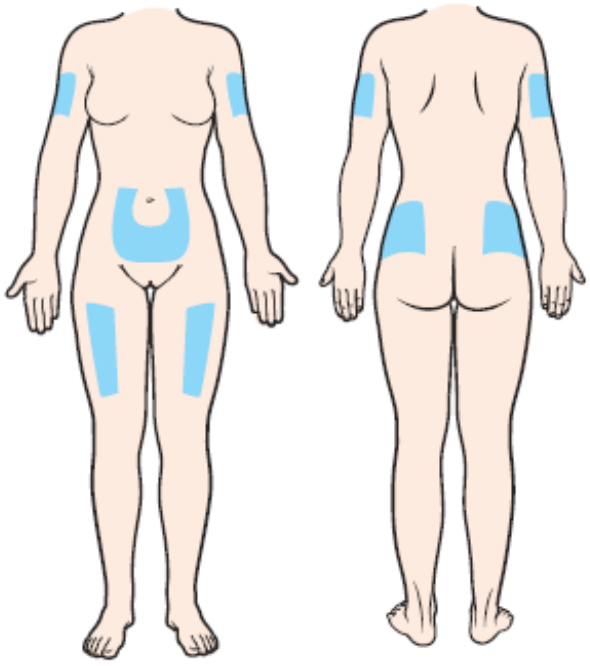


Figure 1. Infusion sites

If your healthcare provider tells you to use a certain infusion site, follow their instructions.

Do not put the needle into:

- A muscle.

- A blood vessel (vein or artery).
- An area that's tender, red, bruised, hard, or that has scars or stretch marks.

Should I choose a different infusion site each time I take Hizentra?

Yes. This is called rotating infusion sites. Rotating infusion sites helps keep scar tissue from forming. If scar tissue forms, it can keep the medicine from working like it should. It also can make it harder to put the needle into your skin.

Will I need to use a few infusion sites at the same time?

Some people may need to use a few infusion sites at the same time when taking Hizentra. This depends on how much medicine you need. During the infusion, you can use more than 1 infusion pump. You'll place a needle into each infusion site, making sure they're at least 2 inches (5 centimeters) apart.

Your home infusion nurse will tell you if you need to use a few infusion sites before you start taking Hizentra.

Why is there fluid at my infusion site after I take Hizentra?

Sometimes a bubble of fluid may form at your infusion site after an infusion. This is normal and will go away within 24 hours (1 day).

What guidelines must I follow while taking Hizentra?

- **Tell all of your healthcare providers you're taking Hizentra.** This includes everyone on your MSK care team. It also includes all your healthcare providers outside of MSK, such as doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- **Take Hizentra as prescribed.** Follow your healthcare provider's instructions when taking Hizentra. Do not change the dose of Hizentra without talking with your healthcare provider.
- **Only take the Hizentra prescribed for you.** Never share your medicine with another person or take another person's medicine.

What should I do if I miss a dose of Hizentra?

You must take Hizentra on a fixed schedule. If you miss a dose, call the healthcare provider who prescribes it for you. They'll give you instructions on what to do.

What are some common side effects of Hizentra?

- Redness, swelling, itching, bruising, or all 4 at the infusion site
- Headaches or migraines
- Flu-like symptoms, such as:
  - Fever, chills, or both
  - Cough
  - Runny or stuffy nose
  - Fatigue (feeling more tired and weak than usual)
  - Nausea (feeling like you're going to throw up)
  - Vomiting (throwing up)
  - Diarrhea (loose, watery poop)
- Pain in your chest, back, arms, legs, or joints
- Stomachache, bloating, or both
- Hives (itchy, raised bumps on your skin), rash, or itching
- Trouble breathing or catching your breath
- Feeling dizzy or lightheaded (like you might faint)

Tell your healthcare provider if your side effects become worse or do not get better. They'll help you manage them. It's also important to tell them if you have other side

effects not listed here.

When do I need to call 911 or go to the emergency room?

Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room if you have:

- A life-threatening emergency
- Any signs of an allergic reaction, such as:
  - Hives, rash, or itching
  - Tightness in your chest or throat
  - Trouble breathing
  - Wheezing (a whistling or squeaking sound when you breathe)
  - Dizziness
  - Fainting (passing out)
  - Swelling in your mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat

When do I need to call my healthcare provider?

Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the signs listed below. If their office is closed, follow the prompts to reach MSK's After-Hours Telephone Triage (AHTT) call center. You also can call the MSK operator at 212-639-7900.

The AHTT lets you talk with a healthcare provider when

your medical problem cannot wait until your care team is available. To learn more, read About After-Hours Telephone Triage at MSK.

If you have a life-threatening emergency, always call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

Signs of a kidney problem

- Lower urine output (when the amount you pee is less than normal)
- Sudden weight gain
- Swelling in your legs

Signs of a blood clot

- Pain, swelling, or both with a feeling of warmth in 1 arm or 1 leg
- Skin discoloration (red or darkened skin) in 1 arm or 1 leg
- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain or discomfort that gets worse when you take a deep breath
- A heart rate that's faster than normal
- Numbness or weakness on 1 side of your body

Signs of meningitis

Meningitis (MEH-nin-JY-tis) is an infection where the tissues around your brain and spinal cord swell. Signs include:

- A severe (very bad) headache
- A stiff neck
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Fever
- Painful eye movements or eyes that are sensitive to light

Signs of a blood problem

- Red or dark brown urine
- A heart rate that's faster than normal
- Jaundice (when your skin and the whites of your eyes look yellow)

Signs of an infection

- A fever of 100.4 °F (38 °C) or higher

How do I store Hizentra?

- Store Hizentra at room temperature. It should stay between 68 and 77 °F (20 and 25 °C). Do not freeze it.

- Keep Hizentra in the carton it came in until you're ready to use it. This helps protect it from light.
- Keep Hizentra in a safe place, such as in a locked cabinet. Make sure it's stored away from others, including children, pets, family members, friends, and visitors.

How do I throw away Hizentra?

- Throw away used needles and syringes, along with any used disposable supplies, in a sharps container. This is a hard, closed container where the needles cannot poke through. For example, you can use a heavy plastic laundry detergent bottle with a lid. Read How to Store and Get Rid of Your Home Medical Sharps for instructions on choosing a sharps container.
- Keep the sharps container in a safe place away from others, including children, pets, family members, friends, and visitors.

How do I get rid of unused or expired Hizentra?

- Get rid of unused or expired Hizentra when you do not need it anymore. The best way is to bring it to a scheduled drug take-back location. To learn more, read How to Get Rid of Unused Medicine.
- Do not flush Hizentra down a toilet or pour it down a drain unless your healthcare provider tells you to.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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