

Is There a Brand of SCIG That Does Not Contain Polysorbate 80?

I am looking for brands of subcutaneous immune globulin (SCIG) that do not contain polysorbate 80. I react severely to foods with polysorbate 80, and my physician thinks that may be why I am having a reaction to Hizentra.

Abbie: I spoke with Leslie Vaughan, RPh, CSP, IgCP, chief operations officer at Nufactor, a specialty infusion company, who says Gamunex-C does not contain polysorbate 80.

When Switching from IVIG to SCIG to Treat CIDP, Can a Neurologist Prescribe a Higher Dose of SCIG Than What Is Allowable by Medicare?

I have chronic inflammatory demyelinating polyneuropathy (CIDP), and I have been treated with intravenous immune globulin (IVIG) for 19 years. I am now planning to try subcutaneous IG (SCIG) under traditional Medicare Part B. My IVIG dose is .47 mg/kg. However, Hizentra has been trialed at only .2 and .4 mg/kg. My neurologist does not know if he can prescribe Hizentra at higher doses, and I cannot obtain an answer from representatives at Hizentra. At .4 mg/kg, my SCIG dose would be 30 grams. I receive IVIG two days every other week at 35 grams each day, which yields .47 mg/kg each day. I've tried IVIG a few times at 30 grams, but it doesn't work as well as 35 grams. I'm concerned 30 grams of Hizentra won't work as well either, and I really want to switch to SCIG. Under traditional Medicare Part B, can my neurologist prescribe Hizentra at .47 mg/kg, which will bring me to my 35-gram dose that I receive with IVIG?

Abbie: According to Leslie Vaughan, RPh, CSP, IgCP, chief operations officer, and Michelle Greer, RN, IgCN, executive vice president of sales at Nufactor, a specialty infusion company, Medicare Part B does cover Hizentra for the diagnosis of CIDP. Unlike commercial insurance, there is not a prior authorization process required with Part B. For dosing, Medicare Part B has a medically unlikely exception (MUE) edit, which means if the total monthly dose exceeds what it believes to be medically necessary, it will likely deny the claim. The MUE for Hizentra is 150 grams. If you receive a weekly dose of 35 grams of Hizentra, there may be months in which you exceed the MUE edit of 150 grams and your claim to Medicare Part B may be denied. However, some patients do receive more than 150 grams per month. In these instances, the physician must justify the need for a higher dose. The pharmacy dispensing your medication would then submit your denied claim for reconsideration along with the physician's justification. If Medicare agrees the justification warrants a higher-than-expected dose, it can enter an override in the member's file so claims for higher grams will be paid for without having to file a reconsideration with every claim.

» **Have a question?** Email us at editor@IGLiving.com. Your information will remain confidential unless permission is given.



ABBIE CORNETT, MBA, is the patient advocate for *IG Living* magazine. She can be reached at advocate@igliving.com or (800) 843-7477 x1366.