



Rho (D) Globulin (RhoGAM) Injection Fact Sheet

Rh Immunoglobulin is a medicine that we give to pregnant women with Rh negative blood factor. This medicine is given as an injection in your arm or hip. Many people know this medicine by the brand name RhoGAM or WinRho.

Why you need RH Immunoglobulin

- If you have Rh negative blood and your partner has Rh positive blood, your baby can have Rh positive blood. If this happens, your own blood may make antibodies against your baby's Rh positive blood. These antibodies can cross the placenta and harm your baby.
- This condition is called **Hemolytic Disease of the Newborn** (abnormal breakup of red blood cells in the newborn). It can cause anemia (low iron), jaundice (yellow skin and eyes), brain damage and sometimes even death of the baby.
- **The injection of Rh Immunoglobulin can prevent Hemolytic Disease of the Newborn if given at the correct time.** A Rho (D) immune globulin injection stops your body from making antibodies. This protects your baby against Rh-induced hemolytic disease.
- It is important to know that if your body does produce antibodies against Rh positive blood, they are usually in your blood for life. This is why we need to watch your future pregnancies so closely. Otherwise, the effect on your future pregnancies can be more severe.

When to get your Rho (D) immune globulin injection

- It is important to have your injection at the right time during your pregnancy and after it. You should have the medication before your body begins to make antibodies. When you are pregnant (ante-partum), you need a dose at 28 weeks and you may need 2 injections.
- After you give birth (post-partum), you need your dose as soon as possible. It is best to have it within 72 hours but you may get it up to 28 days after you deliver your baby.
- If you have testing during your pregnancy, you may need to have the injection. This may happen when you have amniocentesis (amniotic fluid

test), chorionic villus sampling (test to check for chromosomal abnormalities), too much bleeding, abdominal trauma or manipulation (i.e. breech version).

- If you do not carry your baby to full term, you will need to have the injection. This will happen if you have an abortion, miscarriage or ectopic pregnancy (pregnancy outside the womb).
- Having this injection can be beneficial to you as well as your baby. If you ever need to have a blood transfusion, it is easier to give you blood since you won't have the antibiotics that make it hard to match your blood to blood that is available.

Risk and Potential Complications

- There are no known risks to a newborn when the mother has a Rho (D) immune globulin injection.
- There are some risks to a woman who is getting the Rho (D) immune globulin injection. These are:
 - pain and tenderness at the site of injection;
 - headache;
 - fatigue;
 - nausea and vomiting;
 - allergic reaction. (This is a small risk)

Important Notes

Rh immunoglobulin is a human blood product. There are several safety steps to monitor the blood before it is given to you.

- Donors are tested for viruses (such as human immunodeficiency (HIV), hepatitis B and hepatitis C).
- The product is chemically treated to kill viruses and then is filtered to remove these viruses. This makes the risk of viral transmission very small.

When to Seek Medical Attention

Please go see your doctor if you have:

- difficulty breathing;
- bad cough;
- chest tightness;
- fever; or
- swelling of face, lips, tongue, or throat