ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT NEEDLES? IGI IS HERE TO HELP

In this booklet, your friend IGI answers some questions you might have about the needles used for your primary immunodeficiency (PID) treatment.

Remember, if you have any questions, talk to your doctor or nurse.

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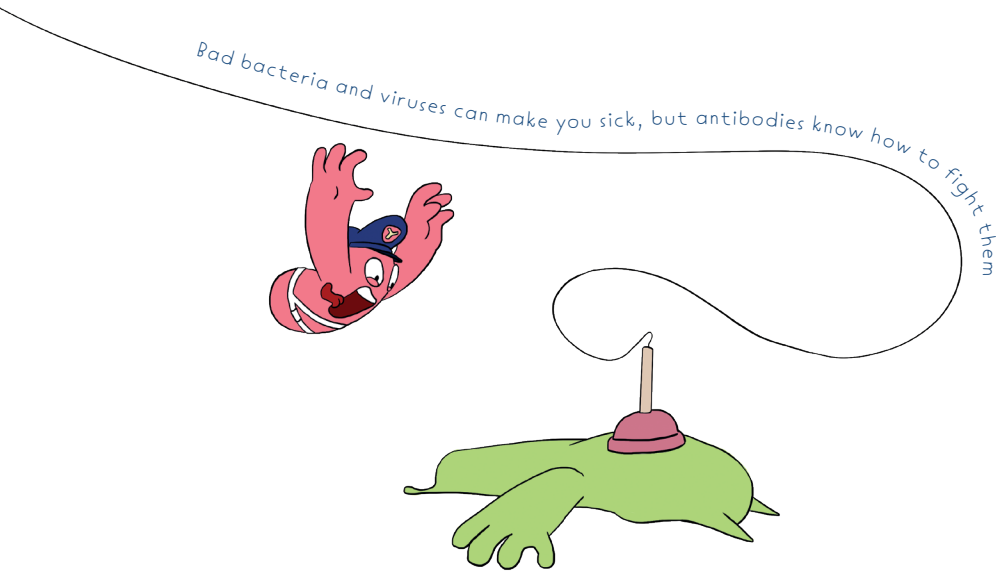
YOUR INFUSIONS OF ANTIBODIES HELP YOUR BODY PROTECT ITSELF

When you have primary immunodeficiency (or PID), part of you immune system is missing or doesn't work very well. You may not have enough antibodies to protect you against bad bacteria and viruses.

When you have an infusion, a needle is used to deliver antibodies into your body to help you fight bad bacteria and stay as healthy as possible.

Needles can seem scary. But it is very important that you have your infusions of antibodies, even if you feel good, to help your body protect itself.



WHAT IS A FEAR OF NEEDLES?

A fear of needles (which some people call needle phobia) is when you are so worried about needles that you don't want to have your infusions.

A fear of needles is quite common - lots of other people have it too.

DID YOU KNOW?

Around 1 in every 10 people has a fear of needles.

HOW CAN A FEAR OF NEEDLES MAKE YOU FEEL?

If you have a fear of needles, seeing or thinking about needles and injections can make you feel quite unwell. Some people feel that their heart beats really fast, they get sweaty and shake, and they feel dizzy. Some people might even pass out.

If you feel this way when getting your infusions of antibodies, don't worry! Your doctor or nurse will help you feel better.

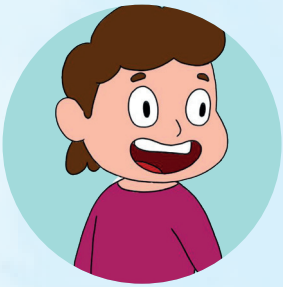
HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT NEEDLES?

Meet Emily, Ben and Chloe. They all have PID, like you. Below they tell us how they feel about needles.

When you think of needles, are you more like Emily, Ben or Chloe?

EMILY SAYS

"Needles aren't the scariest things in the world. They're only little and they help me feel better."



BEN SAYS

"I don't like needles that much. I worry about getting my infusions sometimes."

CHLOE SAYS

"I'm really scared of needles. Anytime I think about them it makes me feel bad. I even fainted at my last infusion. I sometimes try to avoid them."

IS IT POSSIBLE TO HAVE A TREATMENT WITH NO NEEDLES?

Unfortunately, not yet. All of the different types of infusions use needles to put the antibodies into your body to help you fight bad bacteria, so they are important to help keep you as healthy as possible.

IT'S GOOD TO TALK ABOUT IT

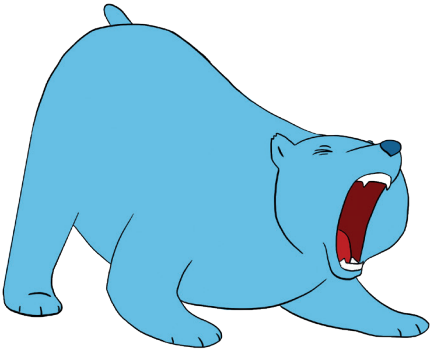
If you have a fear of needles, your infusions can be a scary experience. It is important that you tell your parents or caregivers, doctor or nurse that you are worried about needles. Once they know how you feel, they can help you feel better about your infusions.

THINGS TO HELP YOU FEEL BETTER DURING YOUR INFUSION

The next time you are having your infusion, try the following activities to see if they help you feel better.

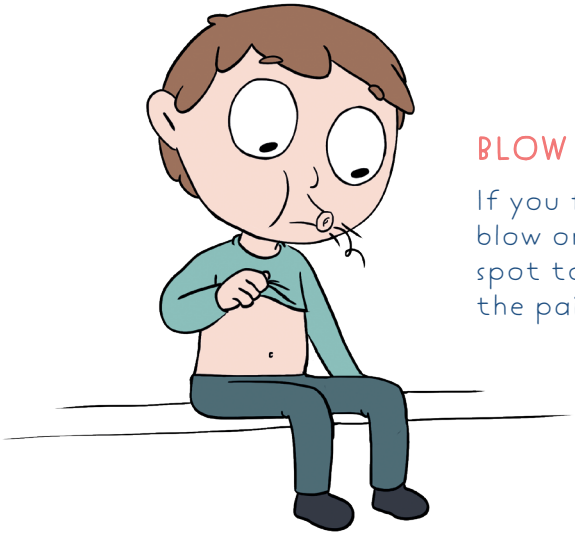
TAKE A DEEP BREATH

Put your hand on your tummy and take a long, slow breath in through your nose, right down into your belly. Then breathe out slowly through your mouth. Try repeating this 5 times.



GROWL LIKE A BEAR...

...meow like a cat or maybe even trumpet like an elephant. Any time you feel worried during your infusion, imitate your favourite animal noise.



BLOW THE PAIN AWAY

If you feel sore, gently blow on your infusion spot to blow some of the pain away.

Remember, needles and your infusions can help you to fight bad bacteria so you can stay healthy.

Don't forget, if you have any questions, talk to your parents, caregivers, doctor or nurse.

Source:

1. Guy's and St Thomas'. Needle phobia an dovercoming your fear: https://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/health-information/needle-phobia-and-overcoming-your-fear. Last accessed January 2026.

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