

# What is IVIG therapy?

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This booklet will help you to understand part of your immune system, how it works, what happens when it doesn't and how intravenous immunoglobulin therapy can help you.

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# immune system

Inside our bodies we have a complex system that helps to protect us from being sick. This is our immune system.

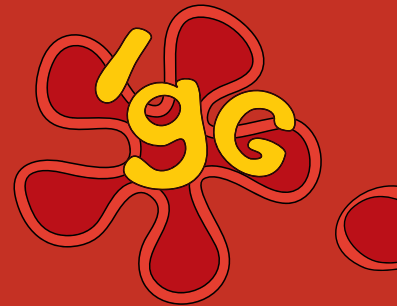
The immune system is made up of many different parts.

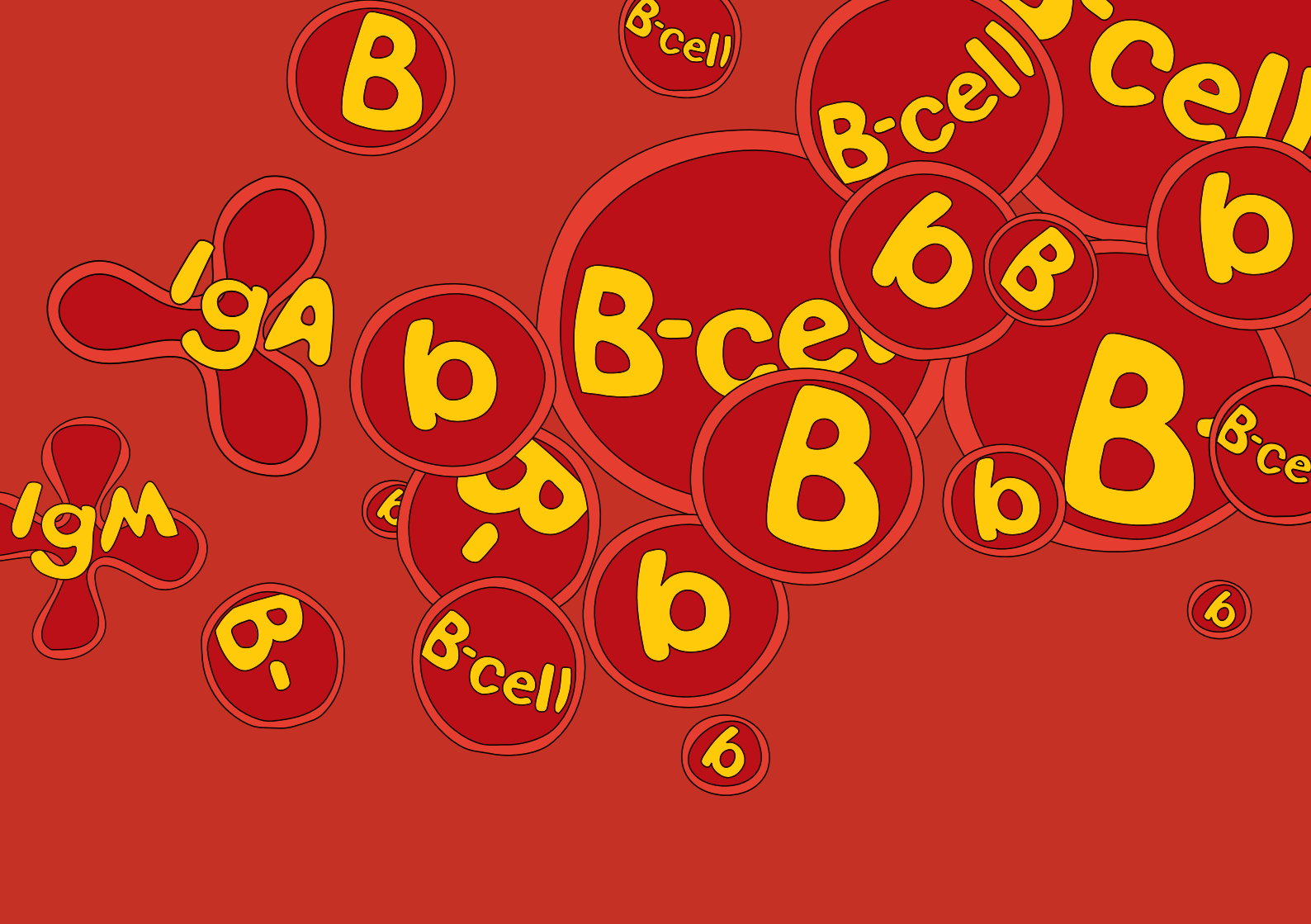
The part that we are looking at first starts with a cell called a B-Cell.

The B-cells make different kinds of **immunoglobulins**, also called antibodies.

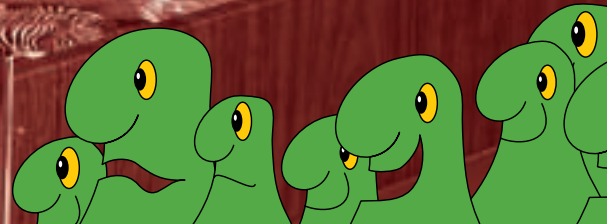
**IgG**, the most important immunoglobulin, travels in our blood to get to the germs.

The job of all the immunoglobulins, wherever they work, is to kill germs such as viruses, fungi and bacteria.



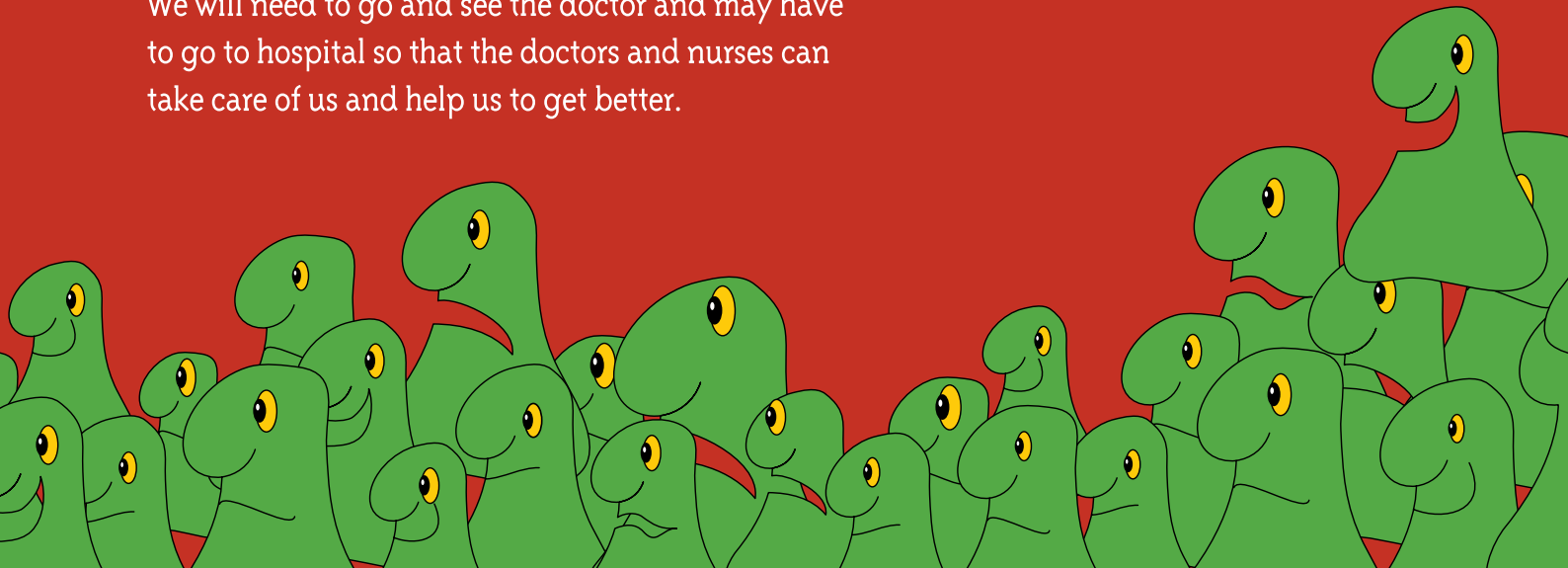


**When our immune system does not work properly.**



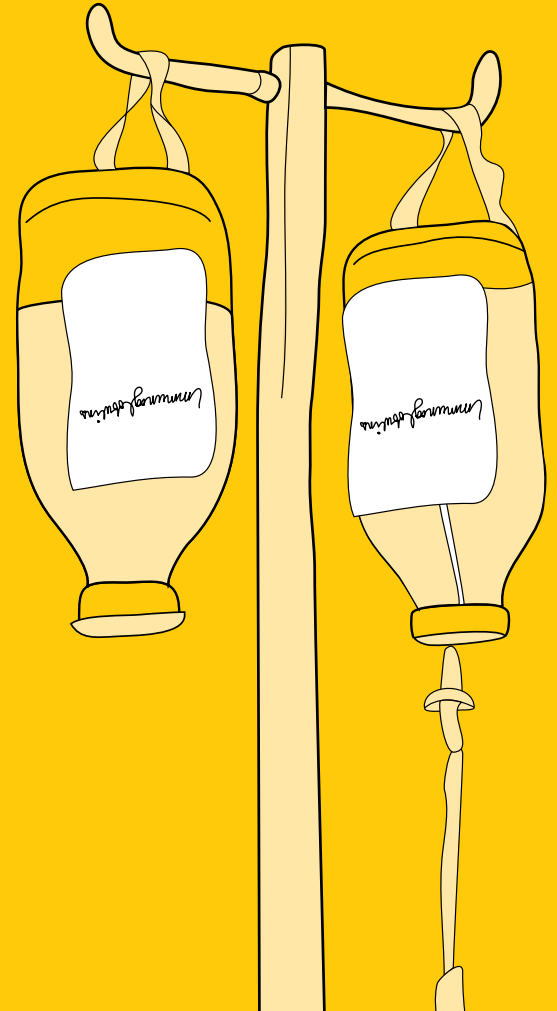
Some of us are born with B-cells that do not make the immunoglobulins needed to protect us. When this happens the germs that sometimes get into our bodies are able to grow into many germs and we get sick. This is called an infection.

We will need to go and see the doctor and may have to go to hospital so that the doctors and nurses can take care of us and help us to get better.



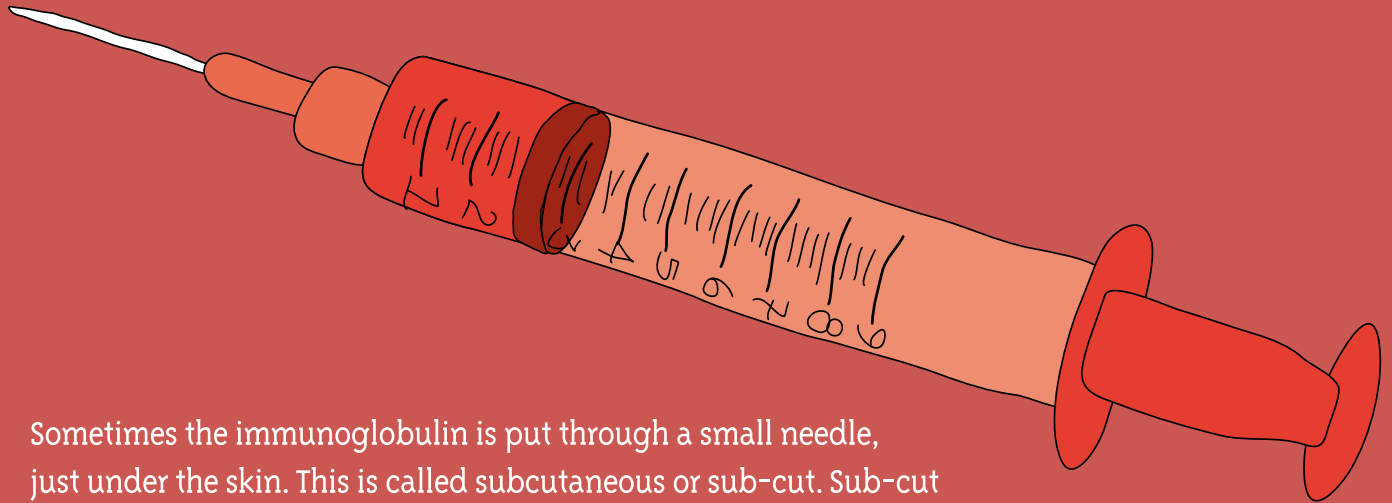


If our body is not making enough **IgG** immunoglobulin then there are ways to get more into our bodies. We can have them as an Injection or in a drip called an intravenous, or IV. This is a little tube put into your arm or hand using a little needle. So that it doesn't hurt too much they may use some special cream on the spot where the needle will go. This is called Emlar cream. It stays on your arm for about 20 minutes to work.



Some of the equipment used for an IV drip.



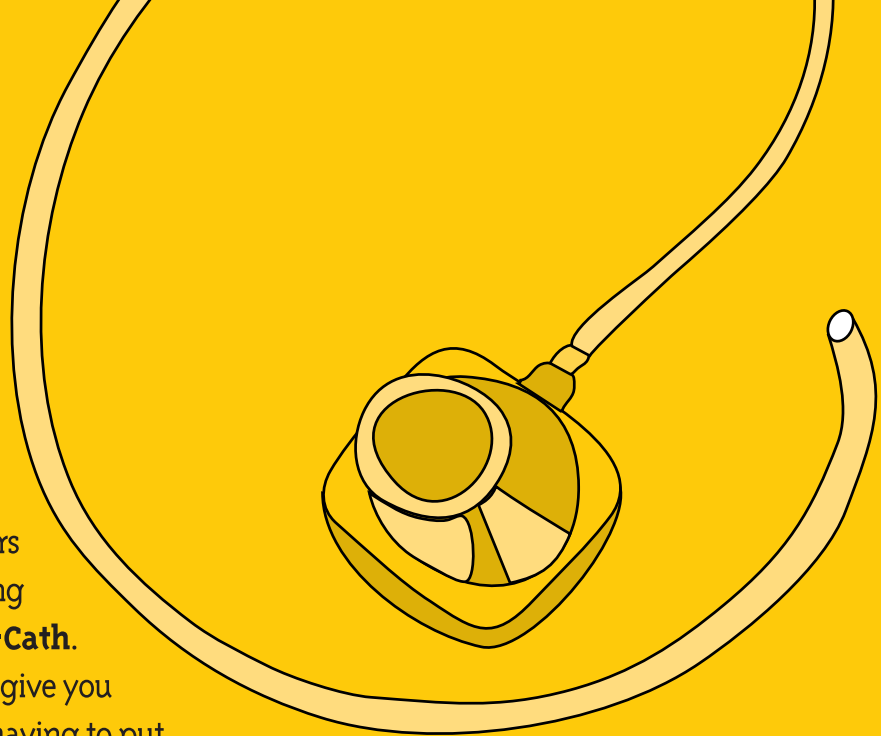


Sometimes the immunoglobulin is put through a small needle, just under the skin. This is called subcutaneous or sub-cut. Sub-cut treatment can be done at home once you have had some special training.

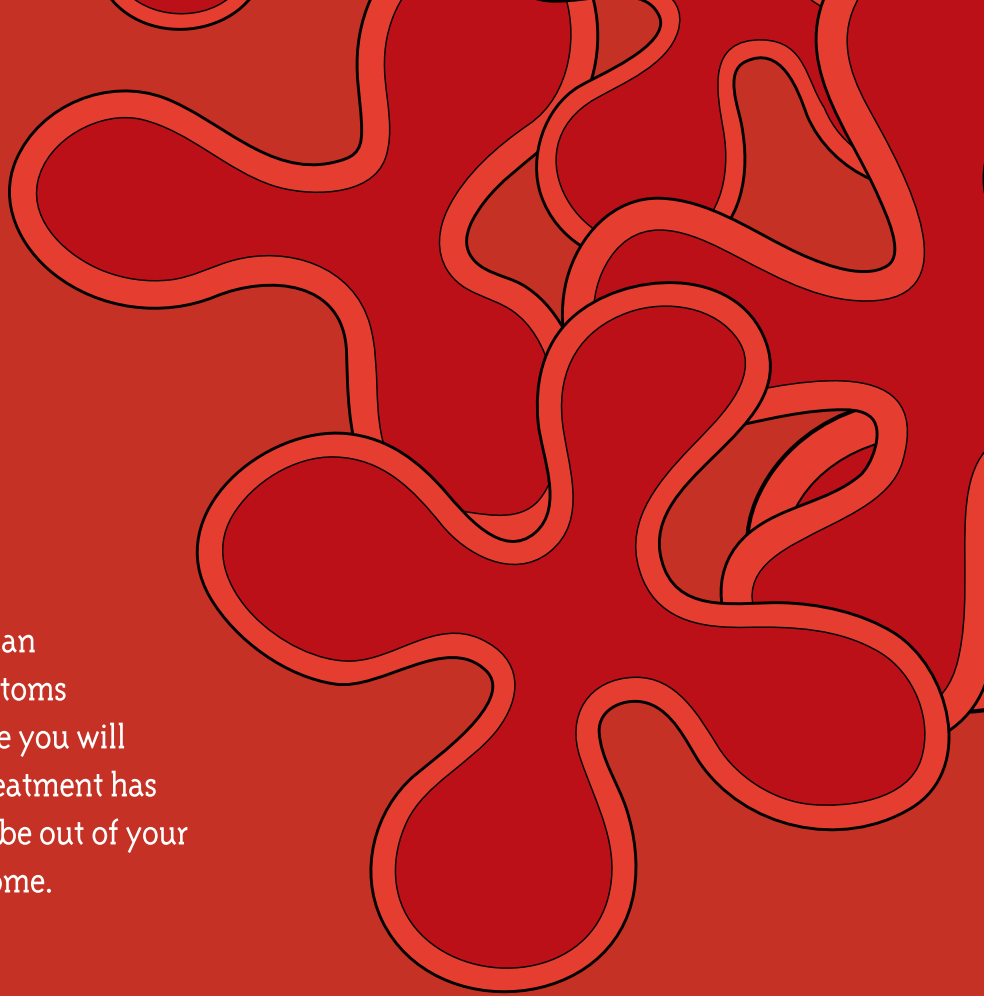


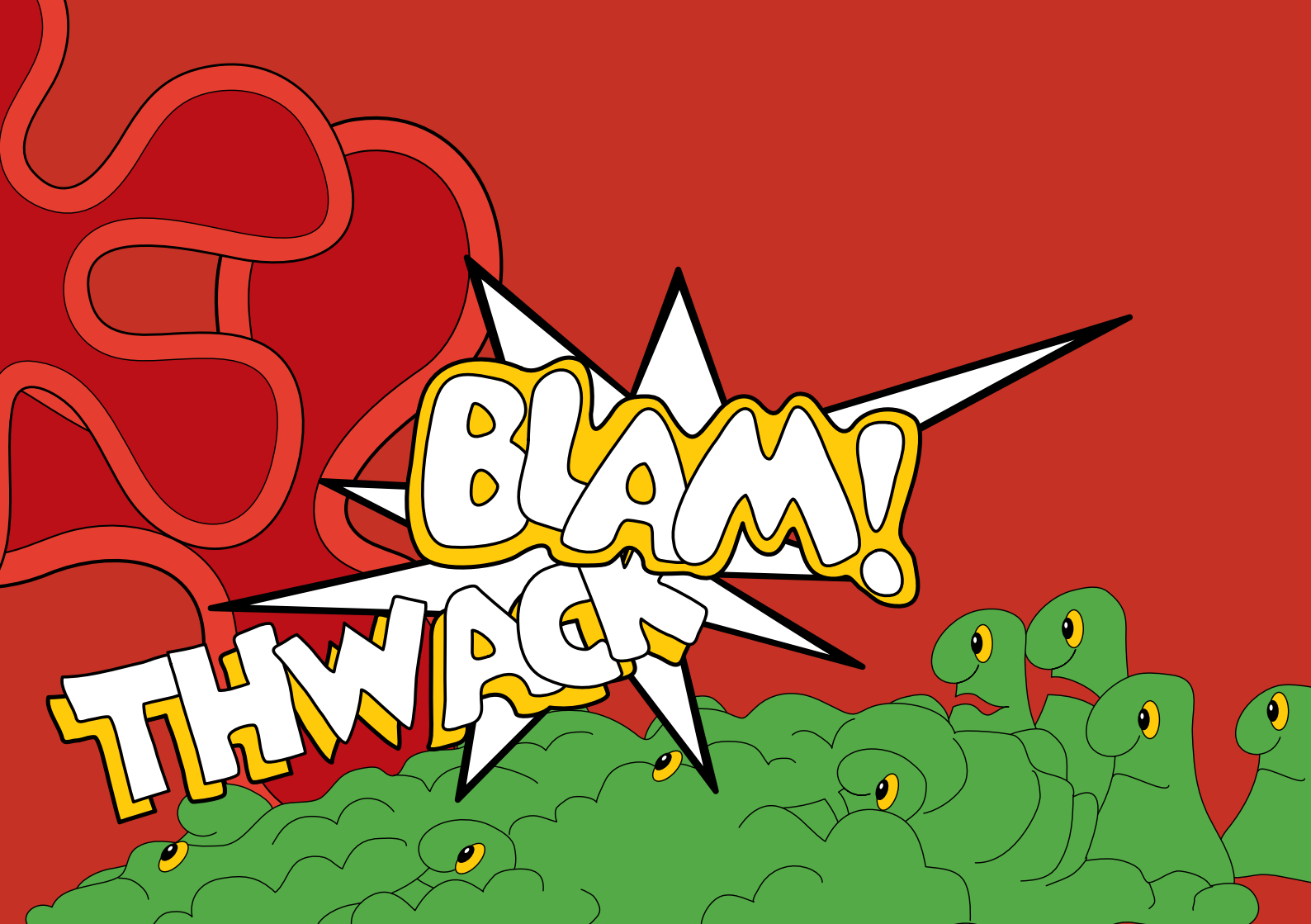
**Immunoglobulins  
transferred by porta-cath.**

At some special times the doctors may put a special piece of tubing under your skin called a **Porta-Cath**. This will make it much easier to give you the immunoglobulins without having to put an IV into a vein each time.



Once the IV is working, a nurse will give you the immunoglobulins. This can take a few hours so it is a good idea to take some quiet things to do while you are waiting. During your treatment, you may feel unwell, shivery, have a slight fever, or a headache. If this does happen, tell the nurse straight away. Usually the nurse can slow the IV down and these symptoms will go. As the treatments increase you will have less side effects. Once the treatment has finished the nurse will take the tube out of your arm and you will be able to go home.






**BLAM!**

**THWACK!**

# MARCH

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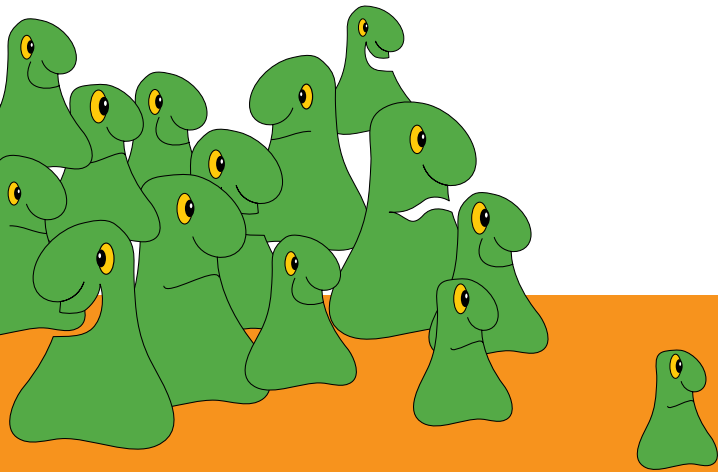


At the end of your treatment you may feel tired so it is a good idea to have someone to drive you. Now you have enough IgG to help keep you well for about the next month, when you will have another treatment. Some people may have their treatments 3 or 4 weeks apart. The frequency can be adjusted if you are feeling unwell before your next infusion is due. The treatments will not stop you getting sick all the time so you may need antibiotics occasionally.



As immunoglobulin, is made from part of the blood given by blood donors you will be asked to sign a consent form before receiving your infusion. If you have any questions about your IVIG treatment, talk to your nurse or doctor. They are there to help you understand what is happening to you. Having your treatment will mean you will be able to enjoy life more and do more of the things you love.





**The Immune Deficiency Foundation Asia-Pacific Alliance, IDFAPA.**

An alliance of not-for-profit PID Patient support groups across the Asia Pacific Region.

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