

# Varicella-zoster immune globulin General Information

## What is Varicella-zoster immune globulin?

Varicella-zoster immune globulin (commonly known as VZIG or Varizig) is used to prevent chicken pox in high risk individuals, such as adults and children with weakened immune systems, pregnant women, premature babies, and babies younger than 1 year of age.

Varicella-zoster immune globulin works by giving your body the antibodies it needs to protect it against varicella-zoster virus (chicken pox). This is called passive protection. This passive protection lasts long enough to protect your body until your body can produce its own antibodies against chicken pox.

This medicine is to be given only by or under the supervision of your doctor or other health care provider.

## Before receiving VZIG:

The following should be considered:

### ALLERGIES

Tell your health care provider if you have ever had any unusual or allergic reactions to this medicine or any other medicines. Also tell them if you have any other types of allergies, such as to foods, dyes, preservatives, or animals.

### INTERACTIONS WITH MEDICINES

Tell your healthcare provider if you are taking any other prescription or nonprescription (over-the-counter) medicine.

### OTHER MEDICAL PROBLEMS

The presence of other medical problems may affect the use of this medicine. Make sure you tell your health care provider if you have any other medical problems, especially:

- Allergy to human immune globulin
- Bleeding problems or thrombocytopenia (low number of platelets)
- Immunoglobulin A (IgA) deficiencies—Varicella-zoster immune globulin may cause an allergic reaction to occur.

## Use of varicella-zoster immune globulin

A health care professional will give you this medicine. It is given as a shot in the upper arm (deltoid) or thigh muscle.

## When receiving VZIG

You will be checked closely to make sure that this medicine is working properly. Blood tests may be needed to check for unwanted effects.

This medicine may cause serious types of allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis.

Anaphylaxis can be life-threatening and requires immediate medical attention. Tell your doctor right away if you have a rash, itching, trouble breathing, trouble swallowing, or any swelling of your hands, face, or mouth after you receive the medicine.

Blood clotting problems may occur while you are receiving this medicine. This is more likely to occur if you are elderly, or if you have a history of atherosclerosis (hardening of the fats in the arteries), heart and blood vessel problems or bleeding problems. Tell your health care provider right away if you have chest pain, trouble breathing, numbness or weakness in your arm or leg, or on one side of your body, trouble seeing or speaking, or sudden or severe headache.

This medicine is made from donated human blood. Some human blood products have transmitted viruses to people who have received them, although the risk is low. Human donors and donated blood are both tested for viruses to keep the transmission risk low. Talk with your health care provider about this risk if you are concerned.

Live vaccines (e.g., measles, mumps, rubella, varicella) should not be given within 3 months after receiving this medicine.

## **Side effects**

Check with your health care provider immediately if any of the following side effects occur: chills, nausea, rash, unusual tiredness or weakness, hives, itching, redness of the skin, shortness of breath, swelling of the eyelids, face, lips, hands, or feet

Other side effects not listed may also occur in some patients. If you notice any other effects, check with your healthcare professional.