

Abbie » I spoke with one of our experts who believes, ultimately with education, there will be growth in utilization of this newer molecular technique. However, at this time, cultures are still the gold standard due to long-term usage with interpretable results and little controversy. While in many ways the genetic/molecular methods are potentially better, they still have issues. Contamination is much more likely, and therefore, specific controls and quality assurance methods must be in place. Further, the molecular techniques are much more sensitive. Sometimes, an apparent pathogen is found that may not be clinically relevant, so understanding how to interpret the results is very important.

Question » Why Aren't More Doctors Using DNA Next-Generation Sequencing to Control Infections?

We're told "culture, culture, culture" to control infections, but the traditional cultures are only 50 percent accurate, and they miss a lot of things. The new DNA Next-Generation Sequencing cultures are covered by Medicare and are readily available. Some doctors are using them successfully, and finding them helpful with recurrent and complicated infections. Why aren't more doctors using them?

Question » How Can I Reduce the Swelling, Cramping and Diarrhea Caused by SCIG Infusions?

Recently, I switched from intravenous immune globulin (IG) to subcutaneous IG (SCIG) due to aseptic meningitis that lasted for two to three days after each treatment. I have been receiving 150 ml of SCIG one a week for five weeks, and I weigh 180 pounds. At first, I had a lot of swelling in my belly. Then, the swelling decreased, but after meals, cramping in my abdomen and diarrhea began. Now, the cramping is daily and the diarrhea is after almost every meal. Do you have any suggestions about how I can administer SCIG without side effects?

Abbie » Swelling and site irritation are the most common side effects of SCIG, and the swelling can last between 24 hours and 72 hours after the infusion. Hydration is an important factor to help with side effects. Our expert recommends a minimum of 64 ounces of clear fluids (water or Powerade) the day before, day of and day after SCIG infusions. He also recommends taking Tylenol and Benadryl pre-infusion to help with side effects.

In addition, he suggests if the site on your belly is a problem, your thighs might be an option depending on the amount of subcutaneous tissue you have. In fact, a lot of patients prefer the thighs over the belly. By infusing in the thighs, you have four sites (two in each leg). You just need to make sure to rotate the sites and move about one inch away from the previous stick each infusion. If you are still having problems at the site, you should consult your doctor because it's possible other medications may be interacting with your SCIG.

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

» **ABBIE CORNETT** is the patient advocate for *IG Living* magazine.