

Travelling overseas with subcutaneous immunoglobulin (SCIg)

Medical/nurse coordinator considerations

OFFICIAL

More detailed information regarding [travelling with blood products in or outside Australia](https://www.blood.gov.au/patient-information/travelling-blood-products-or-outside-australia) is available at the National Blood Authority (NBA) website <<https://www.blood.gov.au/patient-information/travelling-blood-products-or-outside-australia>>

For assistance, if required, contact Australian Red Cross Lifeblood (Lifeblood) Transfusion Support TS@redcrossblood.org.au

1. Current authorisation for SCIg in BloodSTAR

- Consider an infusion of intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIg) prior to travel and upon return to avoid the need to take any product overseas, depending on duration of travel and clinical condition. This would need to be requested and authorised through BloodSTAR.
- The patient must have a current SCIg authorisation in BloodSTAR which must be valid for the full duration of travel. The treating doctor may need to complete a patient review to extend the authorisation period to cover the duration of travel.
- Lifeblood will confirm that the BloodSTAR authorisation is valid for the full duration of travel.

2. Product storage and transport conditions

- Patients are required to supply and pack the SCIg product in a suitable cooler bag which will maintain the relevant temperature for the product.
- Hizentra® and Hizentra® AU must be stored and transported below 25°C (room temperature).
- Cuvitru® must be stored and transported at 2°C to 8°C (refrigerated).
- Xembify® must be stored and transported at 2°C to 8°C (refrigerated), however it may be stored at temperatures not exceeding 25°C (room temperature) for up to 6 months any time prior to the expiry date. If not used within 6 months of removal from refrigeration, or reaches the expiry date, it should then be discarded.

3. Documentation

- Request and complete the form “Approval to Supply Blood Products to Australian Residents for Use Overseas” from Lifeblood Transfusion Support. TS@redcrossblood.org.au
- Proof of Australian residency will need to be provided (copy of passport or visa status).
- Include a copy of the patient’s flight itinerary – (details for all flights are required, including return flight).

- Email the documentation as early as possible, and where possible 3 or more months prior to the planned departure date to Lifeblood Transfusion Support. TS@redcrossblood.org.au
4. If requiring more than 6 months' supply of SCIg product for travel purposes, the patient must email the National Blood Authority (NBA) for approval at least 3 months prior to planned travel. support@blood.gov.au and include Supply.Management.Plasma@blood.gov.au in the email. The email should include the reason for travel, dates of travel, flight itinerary including return flight and the amount of product required for the duration of travel.
 5. Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) export permit
 - The documentation provided to Lifeblood will be forwarded to the TGA, by Lifeblood, to obtain an export permit for the product. This permit is required for international travel with SCIg.
 - Export permits are granted within 3-7 business days prior to travel and will be emailed to the requesting clinician (as per contact details on the "Approval to Supply Blood Products to Australian Residents for Use Overseas" form).
 6. Patient letter - (not required to be sent to Lifeblood)
 - Prepare a letter for the patient to carry with the SCIg. This may be required by the airline or if the patient becomes unwell while travelling.
 - The patient letter should include the treating doctor details, diagnosis, reason SCIg is required and the product and dose.
 - The product and dose on the patient letter must match what is stated on the export permit.
 7. Ordering the product
 - The dispenser must be notified that a special order is required if more than 2 months' supply is needed.
 - If the patient is travelling for an extended length of time, the product must not expire prior to or during the travel period.
 - Order the correct divisions (vial sizes) per dose for the number of infusions required while travelling.
 8. Collecting the product
 - Patient should be advised to collect the product as close to the departure date as feasible.
 - On collection of the product, store at the required temperature. Immediately prior to travel the patient should pack the product in a suitable cooler bag which will maintain the required temperature of the product.
 - The cooler bag containing the product must be packed with hand luggage along with the export permit, letter from the treating doctor and NBA approval if relevant.

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Patient considerations

1. Confirm travel details with SCIg coordinator/nurse
 - Duration of travel.
 - Number of infusions required while travelling.
2. Product storage and transport conditions
 - Patients are required to supply and pack the SCIg product in a suitable cooler bag which will maintain the relevant temperature for the product.
 - Hizentra® and Hizentra® AU should be stored and transported below 25°C (room temperature).
 - Cuvitru® must be stored and transported at 2°C to 8°C (refrigerated).
 - Xembify® should be stored and transported at 2°C to 8°C (refrigerated), however it may be stored at temperatures not exceeding 25°C (room temperature) for up to 6 months any time prior to the expiry date. If not used within 6 months of removal from refrigeration, or reaches the expiry date, it should then be discarded.
3. Ensure you have a sufficient supply of consumables for the duration of travel.
4. Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) export permit
 - An export permit is required for international travel with SCIg.
 - The treating doctor/SCIg coordinator will arrange for this with Australian Red Cross Lifeblood (Lifeblood).
 - The export permit will be emailed to the requesting clinician (as per contact details provided to Lifeblood).
5. National Blood Authority (NBA) approval
 - If requiring more than 6 months' supply of SCIg product for travel purposes, the patient must email the National Blood Authority (NBA) for approval at least 3 months prior to planned travel. support@blood.gov.au and include Supply.Management.Plasma@blood.gov.au in the email.
 - The email should include the reason for travel, dates of travel, flight itinerary including return flight and the amount of product required for the duration of travel.
6. Letter from your treating doctor
 - Your treating doctor will provide you with a letter which should include the treating doctor details, your diagnosis, reason SCIg is required and the SCIg product and dose.
 - The product and dose on the letter must match what is stated on the export permit.
 - The letter may be required by the airline or if you become unwell while travelling.
7. Contact the airline to ensure the cooler bag and SCIg product can be taken as carry-on luggage and if there are any other conditions.
8. Check with Customs/Embassy of your destination (and all countries travelling through) to find out if an import permit is required – Lifeblood is unable to assist with the acquisition of import permits.

9. Make a plan with your treating doctor in case you become unwell while travelling. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) encourage travellers to subscribe, via the [Smartraveller](#) tab on their website, <<https://www.smartraveller.gov.au>> to receive travel advice about the destinations you are travelling to and through.
10. Arrange collection of SCIg prior to travel. It is advised to collect the product as close to the departure date as feasible.
11. On collection of the SCIg product store at the required temperature and then prior to travel, pack in a suitable cooler bag which will maintain the required temperature of the product throughout the journey.
12. The cooler bag containing the product must be packed with hand luggage along with the export permit, the letter from your treating doctor and NBA approval if relevant.

To receive this document in another format, phone [03 9694 0102](#), using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or [email Blood Matters](#) <bloodmatters@redcrossblood.org.au>.

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Available at [Blood Matters Program](#) <<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/patient-care/blood-matters-program>>