

Useful Tips for Parents about Growth Hormone Injections

What is growth hormone treatment?

Growth hormone is a protein hormone that is usually made by the pituitary gland to help your child grow. If you are reading this, your doctor has discussed the possibility of treating your child's condition with growth hormone.

After training, you will be giving your child an injection of recombinant growth hormone (rGH) every day, once per day. Recombinant means that this growth hormone shot is created in the laboratory to be identical to human growth hormone. Growth hormone has been available for treatment since the 1950s. However, rGH is safer than the original preparations, because it does not contain human or animal tissue.

What are the side effects of growth hormone treatment?

In general, there are few children who experience side effects due to growth hormone. Side effects that have been described include headache and problems at the injection site. To avoid scarring, you should place the injections at different sites such as arms, legs, belly and buttocks. However, side effects are generally rare. Please read the package insert for a full list of side effects.

How is the dose of growth hormone determined?

The pediatric endocrinologist calculates the initial dose based upon weight and condition being treated. At later visits, the doctor will increase the dose for effect and pubertal stage.

The length of growth hormone treatment depends on how well the child's height responds to growth hormone injections and how puberty affects their growth.

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Section on Endocrinology Patient Education Committee*

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