

# Botulinum Toxin Injections

## Patient Information Leaflet





## **What is Botulinum Toxin?**

Botulinum Toxin is a naturally occurring substance, made from bacteria. There are numerous brands of Botulinum Toxin; we currently use Xeomin as our first line product but we also use Dysport, Botox and Neurobloc.

## **How does it work?**

Botulinum toxin reduces muscle contraction which reduces stiffness or tone within individual muscles.

## **How is it given?**

Botulinum Toxin is given by injection into the muscle, or group of muscles with a very fine needle.

## **How long will it take to work?**

The toxin takes up to 2 weeks to be effective after an injection and can last up to 6 months.

## **How often will I need treatment?**

This depends upon how you respond to treatment. Injections can be repeated every 3-4 months as needed, providing it is not within 8 weeks of your last injection for Dystonia and 12 weeks of your last injection for Spasticity.

You may be asked to complete a questionnaire to record the effects of the injections.

## **Benefits of treatment**

- The toxin reduces the stiffness and strength in those muscles injected.
- For people who have spasticity it may allow greater movement and flexibility over the affected limb.
- For people who have spasticity it may allow greater passive movement of the muscle. Individual goals will be discussed at your appointment.

## Considerations for treatment

### Botulinum toxin

This product is manufactured using components taken from human blood.

### Anticoagulants

People receiving anticoagulants, medication to thin the blood e.g. Warfarin, **may not be suitable for treatment.** This is not an absolute contra-indication. Please bring your anticoagulant book with you to your appointment. Recent INR (international normalized ratio) levels must not be above 3.

### Pregnancy

If you are pregnant, breast feeding or trying for a baby.

### Doses

The dose will vary according to your needs. The dose may vary as changes in your symptoms occur.

The site of injections may vary according to your needs.

### Side effects

On rare occasions there have been complaints of flu-like symptoms such as headaches, fever and feeling tired. These symptoms are minor and do not last for long. With injections into the neck approximately 10% of cases experience a short lasting difficulty with swallowing.

With injections around eyes there may be a transient problem e.g. double vision, blurred vision and drooping of eyelid.

With injections for spasticity possible side effects are muscle weakness, reactions at the injection site including pain, and haematoma (a localised collection of blood).

All side effects are temporary. There is also a risk of widespread muscle weakness, allergic reaction and breathing/swallowing problems, however these are rare. Fatalities are very rare - fewer than 1 in 10,000. Your clinician will discuss all relevant side effects with you at your appointment.

### **Who to contact?**

If you develop any of the above side effects please contact the Neuro Rehabilitation Outpatient Department, Monday-Friday 9am-4.30pm. Out of hours contact your GP or casualty department. In an emergency ring 999.

### **Consent**

Signed consent form is required before the administration of Botulinum Toxin injections. This consent is only required once.

### **Further information**

If you don't understand any part of this leaflet or have any further queries please contact the Outpatient Department, Walkergate Park. Telephone: 0191 287 5100

### **References**

A full list of references is available on request from the Patient Information Centre, Tel: 0191 246 7288

## What if I have a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint about the service?

If you want to make a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint you can:

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- telephone the Complaints Department Tel: 0191 245 6672
- email [complaints@cntw.nhs.uk](mailto:complaints@cntw.nhs.uk) Please note that information sent to the Trust via email is sent at your own risk
- We are always looking at ways to improve services. Your feedback allows us to monitor the quality of our services and act upon issues that you bring to our attention.

You can provide feedback in the following ways:

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- complete a Points of You survey, available on wards, reception areas or from staff.





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