

Pain Service

Botulinum toxin injections

What is Botulinum Toxin?

Botulinum Toxin is a purified protein that is derived from the infective agent called Clostridium Botulinum. There are various different types of Botulinum Toxins each with their own specific action. The Pain Clinic uses Botulinum Toxin Type A, Allergan and Dysport (Ipsen). It is a safe and effective therapy and has been used for more than 10 years.

What is Botulinum Toxin used for?

You may have heard of 'Botox' being used to treat frown lines and wrinkles. This is one of the brand names for Botulinum Toxin A. It has also been used to treat lazy eye, cross eyes and uncontrolled blinking.

In this clinic we use Botulinum Toxin A to treat chronic pain. We use it for pain where muscle spasm and tenderness can be clearly defined. The toxin is injected into the muscles that are too tight in order to relax them.

How does Botulinum Toxin work?

Botulinum Toxin works by a process which results in blocking the nerve signals that cause muscle contraction. The muscle then relaxes resulting in reduced muscle spasm. This effect usually occurs around two to four weeks after the injection.

How long do the effects of the treatment last?

Usually, the muscle relaxation produced by the injection lasts from three to six months. The effects of the Botulinum Toxin eventually 'wears off'. When this happens the nerves are once again able to send signals for the muscle to contract. For this reason, the effects of the injection are not permanent. Botulinum Toxin injections cannot be repeated indefinitely and your consultant will guide you on how many times such injections may be offered.

What is the procedure for the injection?

Before the procedure

- You will have treatment as an outpatient at the Ely Day Surgery Unit, Addenbrookes Pain Clinic or the Addenbrookes Treatment Centre (ATC). This will be confirmed beforehand at your clinic appointment.

- Your stay may be between two to four hours. It is essential that after the procedure you arrange for an adult friend or relative to collect you by car or taxi. You will not be able to use the bus or train to travel home.
- You will be asked to undress and put on a theatre gown. A doctor will then discuss the procedure with you and ask you to sign a consent form.

The procedure

This information leaflet is to be read in conjunction with the leaflet titled 'Advice to be read before your Pain Clinic injection treatment'.

- Your doctor will determine exactly which muscles require injecting and ask you to position yourself in order to access these muscles easily.
- Once you are in the correct position the doctor will clean the area of muscle with an antiseptic solution which can feel very cold.
- Your doctor will then introduce a needle into the target muscle and inject the Botulinum Toxin solution

Following the procedure

- After the procedure you will be taken to the recovery area.
- The nursing staff will observe you and you may rest for about thirty minutes.
- When sitting up you will be offered refreshment.
- You will then be free to go home.

Please ensure that you have arranged for someone to drive you home after this procedure. Failure to do so will result in your procedure being cancelled.

What should I expect afterwards?

By injecting the muscles with Botulinum Toxin A we are aiming to stop or greatly reduce the amount these muscles spasm. The aim of this is to reduce the amount of pain you experience. This is not a curative treatment, Botulinum Toxin injections cannot be repeated indefinitely and your consultant will guide you on how many times such injections may be offered.

What are the side effects of the treatment?

- After the injection, it is normal to feel a little sore in the injected muscle and around the injection site.
- Around 12% of patients experience mild flu like symptoms, reporting feeling 'washed out' occurring in the first week or two after treatment.
- 1% of patients experience an increase in pain for approximately one month post treatment. This is a 'pain flare' and will improve with time. It does not affect the response to the toxin treatment.
- Very rarely, swallowing difficulties or problems with voice production have been reported when the toxin had been injected near the muscles used for these functions.

Who should not be given the toxin?

Botulinum Toxin should not be given to people in pregnancy or to anyone with disorders of neuromuscular transmission including Myasthenia Gravis or Eaton Lambert syndrome. Caution is advised in those patients diagnosed and significantly affected by Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME), although there is no documented evidence that it affects the condition.

Additional Information

The information in this leaflet is not designed to replace your doctor's advice. If you require more information or have any questions please speak to your doctor or contact the Pain Clinic. (The number below is generally manned 08:00 to 17:00 Monday to Friday; there is an answer machine out of hours, please leave a message and we will return your call).

Telephone number: 01223 216993



We are currently working towards a smoke free site. Smoking is only permitted in the designated smoking areas.

For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169

Help with this leaflet:



If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio format, please ask the department to contact Patient Information: 01223 216032 or patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Polish

Jeżeli chciałbyś uzyskać te informacje w innym języku, w dużej czcionce lub w formacie audio, poproś pracownika oddziału o kontakt z biurem Informacji Pacjenta (Patient Information) pod numerem telefonu: 01223 216032 lub pod adresem patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Portuguese

Se precisar desta informação noutra língua, em impressão de letras grandes ou formato áudio, por favor peça ao departamento que contacte a secção de Informação aos Doentes (Patient Information) pelo telefone 01223 216032 ou através do e-mail patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Arabic

إذا كنت تود الحصول على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، بالأحرف الكبيرة أو بشكل شريط صوتي، يمكنك أن تطلب من القسم الاتصال بمعلومات المريض على الرقم: 01223216032 أو عبر البريد الإلكتروني: patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Cantonese

如您需要以另一語言版本、特大字體或錄音形式索取本資料，請要求部門聯絡病人諮詢服務：電話 01223 216032，電郵地址 patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Turkish

Eğer bu bilgileri başka bir dilde veya büyük baskılı veya sesli olarak isterseniz, lütfen bulunduğunuz bölümdeki görevlilere söyleyin Hasta Bilgilendirme servisini arasinlar: 01223 216032 veya patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Urdu

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی دیگر زبان میں، بڑے الفاظ میں یا آڈیو طریقہ سے درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی اس شعبہ سے پیشینٹ انفارمیشن سے ذیل کے ذریعہ رابطہ کرنے: 01223 216032 یا patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk کی درخواست کریں:

Bengali

আপনি যদি এই তথ্য অন্য কোন ভাষায়, বড় অক্ষরে বা অডিও রেকর্ডিং পোতে চান তাহলে 'প্যাশেন্ট ইনফরমেশান' এর সঙ্গে 01223 216032 নম্বরে ফোন করে বা patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk ঠিকানায় ই-মেইল করে যোগাযোগ করার জন্য ডিপার্টমেন্টটিতে অনুরোধ জানান।

Document history

Authors	Pain Service
Department	Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 0QQ www.cuh.org.uk
Contact number	02113 216993
Publish/Review date	April 2010/April 2013 (minor amendment made June 2010 & \September 2011)
File name	Botulinum toxin injections
Version number/Ref	1/PIN2216