

Having botulinum toxin A (Botox) in the facial muscles

Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery

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Information for Patients

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Botulinum toxin injections (Botox) are medical treatments that freeze (paralyze) muscles, helping to relax them. If you are thinking about Botox injections, make sure you understand why you want them. There are some limits:

- The effect is temporary (not permanent).
- It may not give you the results you want.

Botox has been used to treat Temporomandibular joint disorder (TMD), for example:

- Thickening and overuse of chewing muscles causing pain.
- Teeth grinding (bruxism).
- Sometimes used for people who have regular jaw joint dislocations.

Botox may also be recommended for:

- Frey's syndrome: sweating on the side of the face after having your saliva gland (parotid) taken out.
- Drooling (Sialorrhoea).
- Facial palsy, where one side of your face is paralyzed causing the face to look uneven (asymmetry).

What next?

- You will get an appointment in the next few weeks for your Botox injection.
- You should not drink alcohol for 24 hours (1 day) before the procedure. It thins the blood which may increase the risk of bruising.
- Some over the counter medications also have a blood thinning effect. You should avoid these **if possible** for 2 weeks before your treatment. These medicines include: vitamin E, ibuprofen, ginseng, omega3 (fish oils), aspirin (unless prescribed by your GP).

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Botox injection procedure

We will clean the area. We will use a medical marker to mark the area(s) to get an injection. We put small amounts of Botox into the area. We **do not** use local anesthetic. Most people have 25 to 50 units of Botox, but we can use as much as 100 units.

If Botox is being used to treat Frey's syndrome, then sometimes we may clean the skin with iodine and put corn starch on it. You may then be asked to suck on a boiled sweet to help the 'sweating' to happen. This helps give a more accurate place for injection.

What to expect after the procedure

You will not see any difference straight away. It takes about 2 to 3 weeks to see the full effect.

Avoid massaging or rubbing the treated area(s) for up to 48 hours (2 days). This will move the Botox around which lessens the effect.

We will arrange a follow up appointment after 6 weeks to check on your progress. After a 6 month review we can think about more treatment.

Risks

- Flu-like symptoms, including a headache, for the first 24 hours (1 day) after treatment.
- Bruising at the injection site.
- Temporary weakness and droopiness of your face. For example, eyelids or eyebrows may drop temporarily if the Botox moves into these areas.
- If you have had Botox many times, your body may get used to it. This means it may stop working.
- Reduced lower lip movement. This can be noticed whilst smiling.
- Treatment may not be effective.

In rare cases, serious problems can develop in the hours, days or weeks after treatment. This includes blurred vision (if the area around the eyes is injected) and breathing difficulties (if the neck is injected). You should get medical help right away if this happens.

Contact details:

Call **0116 258 5671 / 0116 258 5301** or go to the Emergency Department outside office hours.

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