

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, be certain about why you want to have them, as its limitations include:

- The effect is temporary (not permanent)
- There is no guarantee the desired effect will be achieved

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

- Thickening (hypertrophy) and overuse (hyperactivity) of chewing muscles, causing pain.
- Teeth grinding (bruxism)
- Occasionally 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 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 and should be avoided **if possible** for a period of 2 weeks before your treatment. These medications include: vitamin E, ibuprofen, ginseng, omega3 (fish oils), aspirin (unless prescribed by your GP).

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Botox injection procedure

The area will be cleaned, and a medical marker used to pinpoint area(s) of injection. The Botox is applied in small doses around the site (local anaesthetic is **not** used). Usually 25 to 50 units of Botox are used, but can be as much as 100 units.

If Botox is being used to treat Frey's syndrome, then sometimes iodine can be used to clean the area and corn starch applied. You may then be asked to suck on a boiled sweet to encourage the 'sweating' to happen, which gives 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 for the full effect to be seen.

Avoid massaging or rubbing the treated area(s) for up to 48 hours, as this will move the Botox around which lessens the effect.

A follow up appointment will be arranged in 6 weeks to check on your progress. Further treatment may be considered after a 6 month review.

Risks

- Flu-like symptoms, including a headache, for the first 24 hours after treatment.
- Bruising at the injection site.
- Temporary weakness and droopiness of your face, for example, eyelids or eyebrows may drop temporarily, if the injected medicine moves into these areas.
- Your body can develop resistance to Botox so that it is no longer effective if you have repeated treatments.
- Reduced lower lip movement, noticed whilst smiling.
- Treatment may not be effective.

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

Contact us on 0116 258 5671 / 5301 or the Emergency Department outside office hours.

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