

Information for Patients

Botulinum Toxin Injection for Strabismus (Squint) under Local Anaesthesia

What is Botulinum Toxin and how does it work?

Botulinum Toxin is a specially purified product obtained from the bacteria *Clostridium Botulinum*. When injected into a muscle it results in a temporary period of muscle paralysis. The effect starts after 1-2 days, reaches a maximum by 1 week and lasts approximately 3 months.

Why use injections for squints?

- To assess the risk of double vision prior to surgery.
- To improve the position of the eyes.
- To correct double vision or a problem with the vision.
- To help with the monitoring of the condition.
- Injections may be used in conjunction with surgery.

Who is not suitable for Botulinum Toxin injections?

- We prefer to delay the treatment in pregnant women and breast feeding mothers.
- People who have a severe phobia to needles.
- People with poor co-operation or difficulty understanding instructions. In children, it may be possible for the injection to be performed under general anaesthesia.

- People who have suffered from any previous blood born infection for example Hepatitis, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). Please inform the doctor if this affects you.
- Some people who have an allergy to eggs.

What happens when you arrive at the Botulinum clinic?

Please do not drive on the day of your injection. Please remember to bring your glasses and any medications that you are taking with you to the clinic. On arrival please report to the reception desk in Module H. An Orthoptist will carry out an initial assessment of your eyes and you will be brought through to the Botulinum Toxin clinic.

Will the injection be painful?

Your eye will be anaesthetised prior to the injection with local anaesthetic drops. The anaesthetic drops take away any sharp pain but you will experience a dull ache (pressure) similar to having an injection by the dentist. The procedure should take no longer than 1 minute.

What does the injection involve?

- Anaesthetic eye drops will be put in the eye(s) that you are having the injection.
- You will be asked to sit on a chair and small metal disks (skin electrodes) will be placed around your eye.
- The doctor will ask you to keep your head very still whilst only moving your eyes.
- The injection will be placed in the eye muscle and a loud sound will be heard (similar to an un-tuned radio). The needle will be left in place for 30 seconds.
- After the injection you will need to arrange a follow up appointment.
- Avoid bending or lifting heavy objects for 2 hours after the injection.

What should I expect after the injection?

There may be mild pain and bruising. You may wish to take pain relief medication, for example Paracetamol, to relieve this discomfort. **If you are already taking pain relief for a different condition continue with these, but do not take both.**

The injection will start to work after 2 days and you may notice a change in your double vision or the appearance of double vision may be noticed. You will also notice a change in the position of your eye.

What are the side effects?

- Under correction of the squint which may require you to have a further injection.
- Over correction of the squint which may result in a delay in further assessment.
- Sometimes the toxin can leak out and affect other muscles. This may result in your eye moving up or down.
- Droopy eyelid; this is usually temporary.
- Bleeding; severe bleeding is very rare. It may take several weeks to settle.
- Permanent unwanted change in the position of your eye after the injection has worn off. This is very rare and may require further treatment.
- Eye perforation by the needle is a very rare complication. It can result in the loss of eyesight from bleeding, retinal detachment or infection.

The information in this leaflet is intended as a guide only, as each patient's experience will be different. If you require any further information please contact your consultant's secretary. The telephone number is on the front of your appointment card.

If you are concerned about your eyes following the injection please contact the Orthoptic Department between 08.30am - 4.30pm Monday to Friday on (0161) 701 4882. Outside of these hours please ring the Emergency Eye Centre on (0161) 276 5597. If at any time you are unable to contact a member of staff on the above numbers, please telephone Ward 55 on (0161) 276 5512 available 24 hours every day.