

# Botox Injection for Migraines

Information and advice for patients

## Pain Management

---

At the Pain Management Clinic, it was suggested that Botox injections may help ease your chronic migraine pain. This leaflet will briefly explain the treatment. It is important that you understand the treatment you will be receiving.

### What is a Botox Injection?

Botox is a purified form of neurotoxin (a toxin that affects the nerves). It is given as several injections into the muscles of the head and the back of the neck. It works by blocking signals from the nerve to the muscle that has been injected; the nerve is unable to tell the muscle to move, which means that the muscle is then able to relax. This helps to stop chronic migraine headaches developing.

### What are the benefits of the Botox injections?

By injecting the muscle/s that are in spasm, muscle spasm is stopped or is greatly reduced. This means the symptoms and headaches you have experienced may reduce.

- The goal of Botox treatment is not to become completely free of headache or migraine; but to improve quality of life, and to convert migraine from chronic to episodic.
- About one in four patients do not respond.
- One in four people respond well to the first or second set of injections.
- Half need more than two sets of injections to get a good response.

### The Injection Sites

Botox is given as several small injections, between 31 and 39 into the muscles at the front and back of the head and the neck.

### What are the side effects of Botox?

#### Common side effects:

- Worsening migraine. (Within a day or two of the injections and this usually subsides. It can be treated with your own usual prescribed migraine medication).
- Rash, itching.
- Pain, bruising, bleeding, or infection at injection sites.

- Drooping of eyebrows or eye lids. (Can begin after a couple of weeks and can last for a number of weeks but does wear off).
- Weakness and pain in the neck. (Can begin after 2 weeks lasting for a small number of weeks. It can be treated with regular simple pain killers or your usual migraine medication).

#### **Uncommon side effects:**

- Difficulty in swallowing.
- Skin pain.
- Jaw pain.
- Swollen eyelid.

If you experience any of the uncommon symptoms or if the common symptoms are troublesome, please contact your GP for a review.

#### **Very rare side effects:**

- Allergic reactions such as difficulty in breathing, swallowing or speaking after receiving Botox.
- Swelling including the face or throat, wheezing, feeling faint and shortness of breath.

If you experience any of very rare symptoms, please report to your nearest Emergency Department Immediately.

### **Preparing for the Botox Injection**

Please let us know if any of the below applies to you.

- People who are pregnant or breastfeeding cannot receive treatment.
- On anticoagulants.
- Other neurological disease (e.g., Bell's palsy, neuropathy, Myasthenia Gravis) as these increase, the risks of side effects.
- Recent (within 3 months) cosmetic botulinum toxin could increase side effect risk.
- Previous problems or allergies with previous botulinum toxin injections.
- Inflammation, weakness or wasting or surgery of the muscles/skin at injection sites.
- Problems with swallowing or food or liquid or any breathing difficulties.
- Chronic muscle disease.
- Nervous system disease.
- Closed angle glaucoma.
- Forthcoming surgery.

### **The Procedure**

On the day you will be admitted to the Minor Ops unit in the Birmingham Treatment Centre. Please note that this is mixed sex facility.

When you arrive, a nurse will check your blood pressure and complete an admission assessment. The doctor will then explain the procedure and ask you to sign a consent form. Please make sure that you understand the procedure and ask any questions.

You may eat and drink as normal on the day of the procedure.

## **During the procedure**

The procedure will take approximately 20 minutes.

1. You will be made comfortable in a seated position for the procedure.
2. The doctor will clean the area.
3. The doctor will then inject the areas of the head where you experience the headaches.

You may experience some discomfort and very mild pain around the injection sites.

## **After the injection**

You will be asked to wait for approximately 15 minutes to check you feel alright and to ensure there are no adverse reactions. Once you feel ready, and the staff are satisfied with your condition, you may go home.

## **Follow Up**

After the procedure you will be discharged back to the care of your GP who will review your progress and can refer you back to clinic in the future, if needed.

## **Contact details**

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us on:

Tel: 0121 507 4866

Monday to Friday 9am – 4pm

If you have any problems outside these times, or are experiencing severe side effects, please contact your GP or go to your nearest emergency department.

## **Further information**

More information with regards to your condition, treatment and support groups can be found at:

### **[Migraine.org.uk](http://Migraine.org.uk)**

Your home for practical health guidance on migraine that's based on science and written by wellness professionals.

**[www.migraine.org.uk](http://www.migraine.org.uk)**

### **The migraine trust**

We're here to help you live with migraine. We can give you information and support now, and we are working at increasing awareness and understanding of migraine that will improve the lives of everyone living with it.

**[www.migrainetrust.org](http://www.migrainetrust.org)**

## Sources used for the information in this leaflet

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (2012). Botulinum toxin type A for the prevention of headaches in adults with chronic migraine: Technology appraisal guidance [TA260]. [Online] Available at: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta260> (Accessed 06 July 2023).

If you would like to suggest any amendments or improvements to this leaflet please contact SWB Library Services on ext 3587 or email [swbh.library@nhs.net](mailto:swbh.library@nhs.net).



**A Teaching Trust of The University of Birmingham**

Incorporating the Midland Metropolitan University Hospital, City Health Campus, Sandwell Health Campus and Rowley Regis Hospital.

© Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust

ML7224

Issue Date: July 2023

Review Date: July 2026