

## Patient Guide to Anti-Wrinkle Injections



### WHAT IS BOTULINUM TOXIN?

Anti-wrinkle injections have revolutionised our approach to facial ageing, treating wrinkles and also excessive underarm sweating. They are relatively painless injections that can last 3-6 months and are increasingly popular.

Botulinum toxins (e.g. Botox®) are special proteins produced by the bacteria clostridium botulinum. They are agents that affect the nerves at the point where they enter muscles, and therefore prevent the muscles from working. These toxins highly effective when used in minute concentrated doses to relax muscles and soften wrinkles. The effects are not permanent, and last 3-6 months.

Other brand names of botulinum toxin are available such as Azzalure may also be available. At Purity Bridge we have chosen to use Botox® as our principle anti-wrinkle injectable.

### WHAT DOES IT INVOLVE?

Botox is administered by an injection directly into the appropriate muscles, usually on the face. It is given with a tiny needle very precisely into various locations in the face. Most commonly it is given to the frown area in the middle of the forehead, and also to the crows feet area. The untreated areas continue to work normally.

Rather than being painful most people describe toxin treatment as being a little uncomfortable. Some factors may make it feel more painful such as stress or hormonal fluctuations.

We perform the procedure in our specialised treatment room at the clinic in Tunbridge Wells.

### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

Botulinum toxin works best in people with fine lines and few wrinkles, and can reduce the amount of wrinkling of the skin. If wrinkles are deep and well-established, Botulinum toxin will not work effectively.

Regular Botox treatment over a period of 12-18 months will help to iron out these creases, but for a more immediate result other treatment options such as [dermal fillers](#) may be a better option. Botox can prevent wrinkle formation if it is started before fixed wrinkles establish. However there is a careful balance when deciding to treat younger patients – premature treatment can make someone look older rather than the more youthful look desired. Whether or not treatment is appropriate is always decided on an individual patient basis.

Botulinum toxin may also be used to treat conditions such as hyperhidrosis (excessive sweating, often in the armpits or palms and soles).

### HOW LONG DOES THE PROCEDURE TAKE?

The procedure takes about 10-15 minutes, depending upon the number of injections needed.

The effects will take 4-10 days to show, and we invite all patients back for a review appointment at 14-days post-treatment

### WHAT IS THE RECOVERY PERIOD?

The injections feel a bit like a small mosquito bite and are not particularly painful. Afterwards, some small red marks are usually present for a short time, before they resolve.

### WHAT ARE THE SUCCESS RATES?

Botulinum toxin therapy has good success rates, which has made it a consistently popular treatment worldwide.

### WHAT SHOULD I DO AFTER THE INJECTIONS?

You may return to normal activities immediately after the injections, as no anaesthetic has been used. Following the injections you should keep your head up and not stoop over or strain.

Do not manipulate or massage the treated area, as this may spread the Botox to neighbouring areas and cause unwanted effects.

Light make-up may be applied 1-hour after the procedure.

It can be helpful to exercise the non-treated facial muscles by frowning and smiling frequently.

### WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS?

Some people experience a mild headache after the procedure, so it is advisable to take some paracetamol prior to having the injections.

- The most common side-effect is tenderness at the injection sites, which resolves within the first 24-48 hours.
- Up to 25% of people develop a mild headache. This is associated with the injections rather than the Botox itself, and can be treated with Paracetamol if needed.
- Bruising is always a possibility, although we take every measure to avoid it by using extremely tiny needles
- If Botox migrates to unwanted sites it can cause weakness and drooping of the eyebrow or eyelid, or facial asymmetry. This is very rare.
- As stated above, it is possible to under-correct or over-correct with Botox, which may require additional treatment 2-4 weeks after the initial appointment.
- Rarely patients can develop more generalised side-effects such as tiredness, nausea, dry mouth (common in patients taking anti-histamines), difficulties swallowing and eye problems.
- Allergic reactions to Botox are possible but extremely rare.

### WHO SHOULD NOT HAVE BOTULINUM TOXIN?

- Botox should not be administered to pregnant women, or to mothers who are breast-feeding.
- Patients with certain conditions affecting the connections between nerves and muscles (such as Myasthenia Gravis and Eaton-Lambert Syndrome) should not have Botox.
- People with a previous allergic reaction to botulinum toxin, or with allergies to egg or human albumin.
- People taking aminoglycoside antibiotics (such as gentamicin)
- Anyone with a skin infection in the area to be treated.
- Caution should be exercised in any patients taking blood-thinning medication such as Warfarin and Clopidogrel, simply due to the possibility of severe bruising.





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