

***If you are considering this treatment:***

- ⇒ Make sure you can pay for the drug at the pharmacy (here at the clinic) or have the appropriate coverage. You are advised to re-view your insurance policy or contact your insurer for this purpose.
- ⇒ Make sure any necessary insurance application forms have been completed and that you have been pre-approved.
- ⇒ If you are insured with Manitoba Blue Cross, make sure you have received an EDS approval for botulinum toxin injections and that you have submitted a copy of this document to Manitoba Blue Cross prior to your appointment.
- ⇒ We advise that you contact the pharmacy at least a day prior to your scheduled appointment (preferably even before you book this appointment) to discuss coverage issues and confirm any co-payments that might be required.
- ⇒ *The neurologist is not responsible for any financial costs relating to acquisition of the drug or clarifying your insurance coverage and it is your responsibility to ensure that you have the necessary coverage and that the pharmacy will provide the drug at the scheduled appointment to the neurologist.*

NB:

THIS IS A PURELY SYMPTOMATIC TREATMENT



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# Botulinum Toxin Injection Therapy - Information Sheet -

Botulinum toxin is used as a targeted or focused treatment for these movement disorders:

- ⇒ Dystonia (cervical, jaw, tongue, vocal cord or limb)
- ⇒ Blepharospasms (dystonia of the eyelid muscles)
- ⇒ Hemifacial spasms
- ⇒ Orofacial dyskinesias
- ⇒ Spasticity
- ⇒ Tics

Localized injections of botulinum toxin to overactive muscles help relax the muscles by blocking the neurotransmitter – acetylcholine – that is involved in muscle contraction. This relaxation results in symptom relief or pain control that usually wears off over several months resulting in recurrence of symptoms. On average, the benefits last about 12 weeks often requiring a repetition of the procedure approximately every 3 to 4 months. The benefits tend to last longer for facial/eyelid muscle than neck or limb muscles but the duration varies from person to person based on their level of tolerance for their symptoms (pain threshold).

Depending on the site and indication, the effect/benefits can be noticed within a few days to weeks with the maximum benefits observed 4 to 6 weeks post injections.

The amount or units of botulinum toxin used varies depending on the brand, the underlying disorder, region of the body (less for facial/eyelid muscles than for neck or limb muscles) and severity of your symptoms.

The injections are performed in the clinic (doctor's office) and the selection of the muscles to be injected is based on the clinical assessment by the neurologist and your symptoms.

*Massage, rubbing, heat application or scratching the injected muscles or sites within 48 to 72 hours of the injections is NOT recommended (to minimize risk of complications).*

For most of the above indications, botulinum toxin is injected directly into the selected muscle or group of muscles using a small needle. Experience varies from person to person but this is most often described as similar to receiving a "flu shot". This can occasionally result in injection site discomfort or pain (you may consider cooling of the site – ice pack or taking acetaminophen following the injection).

*Although botulinum toxin is a "poison", the injections consist of a well-purified formulation (drug) - that has been used successfully over the past 40 years and is safe and effective in proper doses given in the correct locations. The most common potential side effect is muscle weakness near the*

*injection site. For example, eyelid droopiness or double vision when injected around the eye (all usually reversible). Other side effects may include pain, bruising or bleeding at the injection site. Very rarely, injections can cause generalized weakness or flu-like symptoms (botulism). For this reason, injections must be administered by an experienced & trained medical professional.*

A return to clinic visit or phone call at 7 weeks following the initial (first) injection will be arranged to review the benefits and any potential complications or adverse effects to this treatment.

There are four different formulations of botulinum toxin:

- ⇒ Onabotulinum toxin A (Botox) – most commonly used
- ⇒ Abobotulinum toxin A (Dysport)
- ⇒ Incobotulinum toxin A (Xeomin)
- ⇒ Rimabotulinum toxin B (Myobloc)

Feel free to discuss the above brands with the neurologist especially in the case that affordability or drug coverage is an issue as some of the manufacturers might have a patient support program.