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Botulinum Toxin for Adult Squint

Ophthalmology Department



What can I do if I am worried?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding Botulinum Toxin treatment, please do not hesitate to speak to your orthoptist or ophthalmologist on the day of your appointment.

Alternatively, you could ring the eye clinic helpline on **01932 722686**.

This helpline is available from Monday to Friday, between 9.00am and 5.00pm.

Further Information

We endeavour to provide an excellent service at all times, but should you have any concerns please, in the first instance, raise these with the Matron, Senior Nurse or Manager on duty. If they cannot resolve your concern, please contact our Patient Experience Team on 01932 723553 or email patient.advice@asph.nhs.uk. If you remain concerned, the team can also advise upon how to make a formal complaint.

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When does Botulinum Toxin start to work and how long does it last for?

Botulinum Toxin starts to work within 48 hours of having had your injection.

The Botulinum Toxin injection will have taken its full effect on your eye muscle(s) within 2 weeks of having your injection and will last for 2-4 months.

What will happen on the day of my appointment?

You will see your orthoptist (eye muscle specialist) first who will assess your eye alignment, eye muscle movements and will check how well your eyes are working as a pair. She may also plot your eye movements on a graph.

Next you will see your consultant ophthalmologist (eye doctor) who will assess the health of your eyes and will discuss Botulinum Toxin treatment with you. If you decide to have the Botulinum Toxin injection, you will be asked to read and sign a consent form.

You will have your injection shortly afterwards, and will be asked to book a follow-up appointment in the Botulinum Toxin clinic before you go home.

Botulinum Toxin Injections

What is Botulinum Toxin?

Botulinum Toxin, is a chemical produced by the bacterium Clostridium Botulinum. It can be used to temporarily weaken a muscle within the body.

How does Botulinum Toxin?

To move a muscle, your brain sends an electrical signal through your nerves to the muscle. This signal is passed between nerves by a chemical messenger called acetylcholine. When injected into a muscle, Botulinum Toxin temporarily stops the nerves close to the muscle from releasing acetylcholine and instructing the muscle to move, thereby the muscle is temporarily weakened.

Why do I need a Botulinum Toxin injection?

Your ophthalmologist and orthoptist have recommended a Botulinum Toxin injection to you for any of the following reasons:

- To eliminate or lessen your double vision
- To see if you are at risk of double vision if you were to have squint surgery
- To allow your eyes to work better as a pair by straightening your eyes

- To help reduced the appearance of an eyelid which is pushed back (lid retraction)
- To reduce the appearance of the world “shaking” (oscillopsia)
- To assess the effect of further squint surgery on your eyes if you have had squint surgery in the past

How is Botulinum Toxin injected into the eye muscles?

You will be taken to the eye treatment room and asked to lie flat on a surgical bed. If you have mobility problems, you may be asked to remain seated and to sit with your head tilted back. Anaesthetic drops (numbing drops) are then put into the eye receiving the Botulinum Toxin injection. You may have small circular pads connected to electrical leads attached to your forehead and temple. This is to allow the doctor to hear a static sound when the Botulinum Toxin needle reaches the muscle which will be injected.

Once your eye is numb, you will be asked to look in a particular direction (up, down, left or right) to allow the doctor to place the needle within the eye muscle.

Once the needle is in the muscle, it is held there for 30 seconds to stop any Botulinum Toxin from leaking out, and is then removed.

You are able to go home shortly afterwards.

Does the treatment hurt?

Pain is not felt whilst the injection is given due to the anaesthetic drops put into the eye beforehand. Some patients report some minor discomfort during the procedure.

Are there any side effects?

There are possible side effects which can occur when having a Botulinum Toxin injection, however they are temporary and resolve within a few weeks. These include:

- A droopy upper eyelid
- Double vision or worsened double vision

Please inform your ophthalmologist if you are taking any regular medication, or have any general health problems.

Are there any restrictions to my daily activities after I have had my injection?

You are able to continue with all of your day to day activities after your injection. We recommend that you do not drive straight after having your injection.