

What is Botulinum Toxin A?

Botulinum toxin is a naturally occurring protein produced by the bacterium *Clostridium Botulinum*. In a purified form Botulinum toxin is a very safe, effective treatment used in cosmetic clinics and also for a number of medical conditions, such as migraine and excessive sweating.

How Does it Work?

The toxin blocks the transition of chemical messages sent from the nerve to cause the muscle to contract. Without these messages, the muscle stays in a resting state until the 'messengers' recover. This recovery takes approximately 8 to 12 weeks on average.

The aim of this treatment is to reduce the movement of the muscles causing expression lines, for example frown lines. It may not cause the expression lines to disappear completely, this will depend upon the quality of your skin and may take time over a course of treatments. It does not always 'freeze' the expression, particularly if extreme effort is exerted to make an expression.

Botulinum toxin is not suitable for static lines (lines present without expression). There may be only a partial reduction in movement this very much depends on the amount administered and location of product placement. The dose of botox needed varies between individuals, your practitioner will aim to suit your individual needs and expected treatment outcomes, discuss this with your clinician at the time of consultation.

Does it hurt?

It is generally not painful as a very fine needle is used. It is normally well tolerated with no anaesthetic. Ice may be helpful in numbing the skin for nervous patients as well as reducing the risk of a bruise.

After treatment

Most people will see an improvement within 2 or 3 days. The full result may be judged at 2-3 weeks. If necessary a review appointment at 2-3 weeks will assess the movement and further botox can be administered if required.

How long will it last?

You will be advised to keep the target muscles active for a few hours and to avoid extremes of heat or cold, vigorous exercise, lying down or leaning over for 4-6 hours.

Results tend to last 3-4 months Movement will begin recovering from 8 weeks Frequent treatment at intervals of less than 3 months is NOT recommended.

Is it safe?

All treatments carry a degree of risk. All risks and complications will be discussed with you at consultation and prior to any treatment being agreed. Botulinum Toxin should be administered by a healthcare professional with specialist training.

Dr Jo Aesthetics

Side effects include, but are not limited to;

Bruising
Swelling at injection sites
Redness at injection sites
Asymmetry of expression
Drooping of the brow, or eyelid
Headache or a sensation of 'tightness' or 'heaviness'

Adverse events are uncommon, usually occur within a few days of treatment and are expected to be temporary, usually resolving spontaneously within weeks.

Am I suitable for treatment?

I will take a detailed medical history and an assessment of your needs and expectations to ensure this is an appropriate treatment for you.

For best results skin should be in good condition and the target lines not too furrowed. Botulinum toxin cannot be given to pregnant or breast feeding women. It is not suitable for patients with certain neurological disorders, if you are currently taking certain medicines or you have previously experienced adverse reactions to any botulinum toxin treatment.

With any injectable treatment;

Treatment is not recommended if you are suffering from any skin infection in or near the treatment area or are unwell in any way (even a cold). If you are taking any medicines which affect bleeding, such as aspirin or warfarin. If you are currently or have recently completed a course of Roacutane (acne treatment) in the last 18 months.

Caution

If you are planning to attend a special event when a bruise, should it occur, would be unacceptable to you.

If you are planning to attend an important event and any adverse event described would be unacceptable to you.

Some over the counter medicines and supplements can also affect bleeding (make you more prone to bruising) as can alcohol which should be avoided the day before and after treatment. Vigorous exercise, sun exposure, sun beds, sauna should be avoided for 48 hours, or as advised by your clinician, after treatment.