

Antiwrinkle injections (Botulinum toxin)

What causes wrinkles?

Wrinkles are part of the normal ageing process. They can be attributed to sun damage, the effects of gravity, and muscle contraction resulting from facial expressions such as frowning and laughing. Wrinkles due to the effects of gravity represent natural age related sagging of skin tissue. These are generally only improved by surgical tightening procedures. Wrinkles caused by muscle contraction (such as frown lines, forehead lines and 'crows' feet') can be improved by Botulinum toxin treatment.

Which areas of the face and neck are most commonly treated with Botulinum toxin?

For both men and women, the most popular areas treated with Botulinum toxin include:

- Vertical lines between the eyebrows (glabella)
- Horizontal (transverse) forehead lines
- 'Crow's feet' around the eyes
- Horizontal (transverse) lines on the bridge of the nose
- Lines around the mouth
- Vertical neck lines or bands
- Excessively dimpled chin

For individuals with very pronounced lines, repeated Botulinum toxin injections may be needed for maximum effect. For some, injectable fillers may also be required.

Which wrinkles are suitable for treatment?

As every individual is different, Dr Boorer will perform a thorough assessment before advising which treatment is most suitable for you.

Not all wrinkles are suitable for treatment. Whilst Botulinum toxin can be very effective for reducing wrinkles due to muscle contractions, it is not effective for reducing the fine lines on the face caused by sun damage, nor is it effective for managing lines due to sagging of facial skin.

What other conditions can be treated with Botulinum Toxin?

Botulinum toxin is also an excellent treatment for:

- Subtle lifting of the eyebrows, corners of the mouth, neck and jaw line
- Subtle reshaping of square jaw lines and eyebrows
- Treatment of excessive sweating
- Treatment of migraines in suitable men and women
- Treatment of teeth grinding

How does Botulinum toxin work?

Botulinum toxins (trade names Botox® and Dysport®) are produced by the bacteria *Clostridium botulinum*. Although several types of Botulinum toxin have been identified, Type A (the most potent) is used commercially. Botulinum toxin acts by blocking nerve impulses that cause muscle contraction, and hence the wrinkle. This results in temporary muscle paralysis and disappearance (or softening) of the wrinkle. The effects of Botulinum toxin wear off after 3-4 months.

Is Botulinum toxin safe?

Botulinum toxin was first used in 1978 to weaken overactive eye muscles. Over the last 30 years it has been used to treat a wide variety of conditions associated with muscle spasm such as cerebral palsy. When administered correctly, by a suitably trained and experienced clinician, there are few significant adverse effects. Botulinum toxin was first used cosmetically in 1990, to reduce facial wrinkles arising from muscle contraction. Only tiny amounts of the toxin are injected during a treatment. This dose is not absorbed into the rest of the body.

What can I expect at the time of and after the procedure?

Dr Boorer personally performs Botulinum toxin treatments in her Private Rooms. There is no preparation necessary and no anaesthetic is required. Ice packs may be used before treatment to dull sensation in the target region, and may also be used after treatment to minimise the risk of bruising. Dr Boorer uses a very small needle to inject Botulinum toxin directly into the muscles that cause the wrinkles. Depending on the size of the target region, usually 5 - 20 injections are required. Most people do not find these injections to be particularly painful.

Immediately following the procedure you may notice some redness at the injection sites. This redness may last for up to 30 minutes. Some people also experience mild bruising which can last up to 1-2 days. This can be covered with makeup. Dr Boorer recommends that you don't rub the affected area for 12 hours and don't engage in vigorous exercise for 24 hours.

What are the results?

The effects of Botulinum toxin treatments are usually noticeable 1-2 days after injection, and the maximum effect is usually observed after 1-2 weeks. When Botulinum toxin is injected into muscles that are responsible for expression wrinkles, the face will gain a more relaxed and smoother appearance. There is a gradual fading of this effect approximately 3-4 months after the treatment. At that time and you may elect to return to have another treatment.

Who is not suitable for treatment?

The use of Botulinum toxin is contraindicated in individuals with neuromuscular disorders such as myasthenia gravis, and individuals who are taking certain muscle relaxant medications. Botulinum toxin should not be used by women who are pregnant or breast feeding. Its use is also contraindicated in individuals with infection or inflammation at the proposed treatment site, and in individuals with bleeding disorders.

What are the possible unexpected outcomes?

The large majority of patients who receive treatment with Botulinum toxin from an experienced and well trained surgeon do not experience any unexpected outcomes. No severe complications from cosmetic uses of Botulinum toxin have been reported in the medical literature. Some individuals may experience unwanted weakening of muscles adjacent to the treatment area. This could lead to the development of temporary complications including facial muscle weakness or asymmetry. For example, in procedures requiring Botulinum toxin injections near the eyebrows, approximately 1 in 100 patients may experience unwanted eyelid droopiness. This temporary complication is correctable with eye drops.

Dr Boorer is a fully trained and experienced surgeon with a detailed understanding of facial anatomy. Her knowledge and experience enables her to achieve optimal results and minimise unwanted complications.