

## Education

### Botox Treatment of Wrinkles

What is Botox?

Botox is a very diluted form of a substance called botulinum toxin, type A. It comes from the bacteria that cause botulism. Injections of botulinum are used to smooth wrinkles on the face.

How is it used?

Botox is injected into the muscles that cause wrinkles when you frown, squint, laugh or smile. These muscles are in the forehead and around the eyes or neck. The injections stop nerve impulses from moving to the injected muscles, so the muscles relax and the skin looks smoother.

The shots cause very little discomfort, but your health care provider may numb the area with ice or an anesthetic cream before giving you the shots. The treatment takes about 10 minutes. The shots do not cause numbness.

It takes 4 days for Botox to start to relax the muscles. The results may last up to 4 months. As the muscle returns to normal, you will see the wrinkle again. To keep the effects, you will need to repeat treatments every 3 to 6 months.

How should I take care of myself after the treatment?

- Follow your health care provider's instructions.
- You should not bend over or lie down for 6 hours after an injection to keep the toxin from spreading to other muscles.
- Botox may cause a dry mouth. Sucking on hard, sugar-free candy or chewing sugar-free gum may help.
- If you need emergency care, surgery, or dental work, tell the health care provider or dentist that you are taking this medicine.

What are the benefits?

Fewer wrinkle lines will appear between your brows ("frown lines") and in other areas where you have the shots. (Deep wrinkle creases may still show.) The process of wrinkling stops as long as the Botox is working.

What are the risks?

Before receiving Botox, tell your health care provider if you have ever had heart disease or a nerve or muscle disorder such as ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease) or myasthenia gravis. Botox may make these conditions worse.

Do not use Botox if you are pregnant or think you might be pregnant or if you are breast feeding.

Other possible risks include:

- bruises, stinging or redness around injection sites
- droopy eyelid, which can last for a few weeks
- upset stomach
- headache.

Treatment with this medicine may cause your body to form antibodies that may make future treatments less effective. You should receive the lowest effective dose, with at least 3 months between shots.

Injections in the muscles close to the eyes may cause you to blink less. This may harm your eyes. Your health care provider may prescribe eyedrops, ointment, soft contact lenses, or an eye patch to protect your eyes until the medicine has worn off enough for you to be able to blink normally again.

This substance is the same as the bacterial nerve toxin that causes botulism. Botulism is a life or death illness that makes it hard for a person to move the arms and legs or to breathe. But the risk of botulism from Botox treatment is low if it is used

the right way.

Getting treatment from a qualified physician who is experienced in using Botox may help to decrease risks. Choose a medical setting where sterile techniques are used.

When should I call my health care provider?

Call your provider right away if:

- You have trouble swallowing, speaking, or breathing.
- You feel very weak or have trouble moving.
- You have side effects that continue or get worse.

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