Botulinum toxin (BOTOX) for migraine
What is Botox?

Botox is a specialist treatment used for relief and prevention of migraine. Botulinum toxin type A is a protein substance which is produced by the bacteria Clostridium botulinum. It is a neurotoxin which means that it interferes with the way nerves work.

How does Botox work?

Botulinum toxin type A (BOTOX) is thought to work in chronic migraine by relaxing muscles and by blocking the pain signals which are involved in the development of a migraine. These actions may have the effect of stopping a migraine headache from being triggered.

Who can have Botox?

To be eligible for this treatment you must have headaches for 15 or more days each month, with migraine headaches being on at least eight of these. You must have also tried at least three other medications to prevent migraine before this treatment is prescribed for you.
Contraindications

Some conditions may mean that certain medications are not suitable.

Please let your Doctor know if you have any of the following:

■ If you are pregnant, trying for a baby and breast feeding.
■ If you have any muscle problems, particularly any muscle weakness.
■ If you have an infection or any swelling near any of the areas that will be injected.
■ If you have difficulty in swallowing or with your breathing.
■ If you are taking any other medications. This will include any medicines which are available without prescription, such as herbal or complimentary medicines.
■ If you have ever had an allergic reaction to a medicine.

How is the procedure performed?

You will be taken into the treatment room and seated in a comfortable position.

You may need to remove your top.

You will have approximately 31 small injections into 7 head and neck muscle areas with a very fine needle. The procedure should take no longer than 10 to 15 minutes.
Injection sites

Afterwards

You will be able to leave the department after 20 minutes or so and resume normal activity. You should have someone drive you home.

You will be given a diary to complete over the following 3 months.

Side effects

Common side effects affect less than 1 in 10 people.

You may experience:

- Pain at the sites where you have been injected.
- Neck and muscle pain or stiffness.
- Skin rash and itching.
- Worsening of headache or migraine.
- Eyelid drooping, paralysis of face.
If you experience any difficulty swallowing, speaking or breathing, speak to your doctor or go to an emergency department straightaway.

**References**


**Further information.**

The Migraine Trust, 52-53 Russell Square London WC1B 4HP, Tel 020 7631 6970. Website; www.migrainetrust.org

British Pain Society, Third floor, Churchill House, 35 Red Lion Square, London, WC1R 4SG Tel: 020 7269 7840 website: www.britishpainsociety.org

If you or the individual you are caring for need support reading this leaflet please ask a member of staff for advice.

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