

Guide to Botulinum Toxin (BT) Injections.

BT injections are a quick, low-pain and a minimally invasive way to reduce wrinkles and the effects of ageing on your skin. They are also very safe. Treatment involves injecting minute amounts of the toxin that is not absorbed by the rest of the body. The material used contains human serum albumin as a stabilising protein, similar to vaccines, this has never been associated with human transmissible disease. BT has been used in medicine for 30 years without any general health problems.

What conditions can benefit from BT?

- Facial expression lines and wrinkles
- Excessive sweating

How can BT help me?

In general, men and women can benefit from the following:

Wrinkle and line reduction

- Preventative reduction of excessive expression lines that can lead to permanent wrinkles
- Reduction of vertical frown lines between the eyebrows
- Reduction of horizontal worry lines on the forehead
- Reduction of crows feet at the side of the eyes
- Reduction of bunny lines on the nose
- Reduction of chin dimpling
- Reduction of perioral lip lines

Perspiration reduction

Areas of excessive perspiration such as armpits are injected using the same technique as wrinkle reduction by one of our Dermatologists. In some cases a Medicare rebate is applicable for this treatment.

What does the procedure involve?

BT is introduced into the skin through several small injections using a very small needle. The injections are placed along the muscles treated and are usually well tolerated. The number of injections depends on the areas treated. No local anaesthetic is required as the injection sting is not intense and only transient. Ice application may be helpful to reduce any injection-related discomfort.

What happens after treatment and how long will the results last?

Immediate redness can occur over the injection site, but it will settle within 15 minutes. Occasionally, subtle bruising may develop over the next 48 hours, especially around the outer eyes where there are more blood vessels. This is usually not obvious and resolves in a few days. The BT will start to work from day 3 onwards, and usually will be fully established by 7-14 days. The effects will wear off after 3-4 months, although the benefits may continue for some time further as the treated muscles are less bulky and active compared to before treatment. After several treatment sessions, the interval between injections can be longer as the BT effects may last longer. You will be required to return two weeks post treatment so that the symmetry at the treated site can be checked.

What are the unwanted side effects of BT?

In older patients, temporary drooping of the brow may occur after too much 'relaxation' of the horizontal forehead lines. If this occurs, it will gradually settle over the next few weeks. This is preventable in subsequent treatment sessions by reducing the dose. Minor and temporary drooping of the upper eyelid may occur from injections around the eyes in 1% of patients. This usually lasts 2-3 weeks and can be corrected with prescription eye drops prescribed by the doctor. Similarly, temporary double vision may occur in less than 1% of patients. Rarely, transient headaches may occur. It is useful to recognise that all the above side effects are uncommon and only temporary.

Is BT suitable for everyone?

There are certain conditions in which we may not treat:

- Pregnant or breast-feeding women
- Children under the age of 18
- Individuals with a history of stroke, paralysis, nerve or muscle disease
- Any emotional, mental or medical condition that may lead to unrealistic expectations
- Anyone with a history of significant adverse reactions to BT injections.

To decide what treatment is best for you, please discuss this with your Doctor/Registered Nurse.