

Department of Urogynaecology

Bladder Botox

Information for women



You have been given this leaflet as your doctor has recommended that you have Botox injected into your bladder, because your bladder is overactive. It tells you what the procedure involves, what will happen when you come into hospital and what to expect afterwards.

Why has my doctor recommended Botox injections for my bladder condition?

Your doctor has recommended that you have Botox injections because you have an overactive bladder. This can cause problems with how often you need to pass urine, the sensation of suddenly needing to urinate and urge incontinence (leaking urine with urgency before getting to the toilet). You are likely to have already tried alternative treatments, such as medication and behavioural treatment in the form of bladder training. You may have found that these treatments have not helped you. You must have tried these treatments before having Botox injected into your bladder.

What is Botox?

Botulinum toxin (Botox) has been used for several years for the treatment of a variety of conditions which are caused by muscle overactivity (such as muscle spasms in people with spinal injuries and cerebral palsy). Botox works by binding to the nerve endings of muscles, blocking the release of the chemical that causes the muscle to contract.

Botox is now licensed for being injected into the bladder. It is also recommended by NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) for women who have tried but not had any relief from the other treatments mentioned earlier.

How is the Botox injected into my bladder muscle?

This is a day case procedure, which means that you will be able to go home later on the same day. It is carried out either in theatre or in the diagnostic suite in the Gynaecology outpatient area. We will ask you to come to hospital on the day you are to have the Botox injections. You will be sent the appointment date in a letter.

Botox is most commonly injected under local anaesthetic (when you are awake but the area is made numb with an injection of anaesthetic) but can sometimes be done under general anaesthetic (when you are made to sleep). If you are having local anaesthetic the procedure will take approximately 10 minutes.

If you are having the procedure under a general anaesthetic, your doctor will talk with you about preparing for the anaesthetic and recovery. You will also be able to talk with the anaesthetist about the risks of having a general anaesthetic.

The doctor will use a special, narrow telescope to examine your bladder – this is called a cystoscopy. The telescope is passed through your urethra into your bladder so no cuts need to be made on your skin. The doctor will examine your bladder carefully and then inject the Botox into the bladder wall through a special needle passed through the telescope.

What are the benefits, side effects and risks?

- Whilst Botox injections reduce the frequency, urgency and severity of urge incontinence in many women, some women do not experience any relief of their symptoms. Rarely, some women report that their symptoms are worse after the injections.
- Botox is sometimes so effective that it can be very difficult to pass urine after having the injections. Some women (5 out of 100) will not be able to pass urine at all. This is called retention of urine. This does not always happen immediately; it can sometimes take 1-2 weeks to develop. If this happens you will be taught how to put a catheter (hollow tube) into your bladder to empty it. This is called clean intermittent self-catheterisation. You will be taught this by either a Specialist Nurse from the hospital or a nurse from the Community Continence team. The nurse who teaches you how to catheterise will also advise you how many times a day you need to do this.

You will need to self-catheterise until the Botox wears off and you start passing urine again and fully emptying your bladder. This could take 6 to 12 months.

- Very rarely, women can experience generalised muscle weakness or a flu-like illness following the injections. This may last for a week or two.
- You may see blood in your urine immediately after the procedure. If this happens, please drink 1.5 to 2 litres of fluid per day to help flush your bladder out and prevent infection.
- If you have one or a combination of the following symptoms, you may have a urinary tract infection:
 - the sensation that you need to pass urine very frequently
 - pain when passing urine
 - cloudy urine

- pain in your side, near your groin
- feeling hot and having a temperature.

Please make an appointment with the practice nurse at your GP surgery to have your urine tested. If you have a urine infection you will need some antibiotics to clear it up.

How long will the benefits last?

Your symptoms may take 7 to 14 days to respond to the injections. You may find that your symptoms get worse before they get better.

The effects of the injections last for different lengths of time for different women. For some women, the effects last for a few months; others experience improvement in their symptoms lasting for around a year. You may want to have repeat injections when the effect of the Botox wears off, if you think it has been beneficial.

Follow-up

One of the Specialist Nurses will contact you eight weeks after having the Botox injections, to check on your response to the treatment. If there are any concerns, we will ask you to come in for a clinic appointment.

How to contact us

If you have any questions or concerns please telephone:

Urogynaecology Nurse Specialists

Tel: 01865 222 767

(8am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

Or

Gynaecology Ward Nurses

Tel: 01865 222 001/2

(24 hours)

If you have an urgent concern please call the Gynaecology Ward Nurses, your GP or NHS 111 (Freephone from landlines and mobiles).

Further help and information

Bladder and Bowel Foundation

Helpline: 0845 345 0165

Website: www.bladderandbowelfoundation.org/

Email: info@bladderandbowelfoundation.org

Cystitis and Overactive Bladder Foundation

Advice Line: 0121 702 0820

Website: www.cobfoundation.org

Email: info@cobfoundation.org

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE)

NICE is an independent organisation responsible for providing national guidance on promoting good health and preventing and treating ill health.

Website: www.nice.org.uk

Information sheet: <http://guidance.nice.org.uk/CG171>

Oxford Gynaecology and Pelvic Floor Centre

Oxford Gynaecology and Pelvic Floor Centre provides specialist services for women with gynaecological and pelvic floor problems, on referral by their GP or doctor.

Website: www.oxfordgynaecology.com/

If you have a specific requirement, need an interpreter, a document in Easy Read, another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221 473** or email **PALSJR@ouh.nhs.uk**

Miss Natalia Price, Consultant Urogynaecologist
Beverly White, Urogynaecology Nurse Practitioner
February 2015
Review: February 2018
Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust
Oxford OX3 9DU
www.ouh.nhs.uk/information

