

# Botulinum toxin Treatment for squint

Information for patients

Maidstone, Medway and Tunbridge Wells

Orthoptic Clinics: ☎ 01622 226236

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### **What is botulinum toxin?**

Botulinum toxin is a substance which temporarily paralyses the injected muscle.

### **Why do I need botulinum toxin?**

The aim of this treatment is to temporarily paralyse one eye muscle in order to re-balance the two eyes and make them straighter.

The injection may be performed prior to squint surgery as a test to see if there is a risk of double vision after surgery.

The injection is usually performed in the outpatient clinic.

### **Are there any side effects?**

The treatment is safe and there is no risk to your general health. However, there are occasional local side effects:

- Temporary double vision, drooping of the upper eyelid or slight redness to the surface of the eye.
  - The double vision can cause problems with driving or work so it may be necessary to wear an eye patch temporarily to help with this.
  - The eye may feel a bit sensitive or bruised.
  - There is a very small risk of the injection going inside the eye; the risk of affecting the vision is less than 1 in 1000.
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The doctor will explain the risks and side effects to you before you are asked to sign the consent form. Most of these side effects resolve within a few days or weeks, but if you have any concerns after the injection, please contact Maidstone Orthoptic Department.

Note: For individuals who are pregnant or breast feeding, please inform the clinician as the botulinum toxin injection may have to be postponed.

### **Is any special preparation required?**

No special preparation is required. However, you may be asked to have glasses without a prism available for when the botulinum toxin injection starts to work.

### **What should I do if I can't attend an appointment?**

Please contact the Orthoptic Department on ☎ 01622 226236 and let us know as soon as possible if you can't attend an appointment.

### **What happens on the day of the procedure?**

- On arrival at the Orthoptic Department you will be assessed by an Orthoptist who will re-check the measurement of your squint.
- You will then be seen by a doctor who will explain the botulinum toxin treatment and answer any questions you may have; you will be asked to sign a consent form.

### **What will happen during the procedure?**

- Your eye, and skin over the eye muscles, will be numbed with local anaesthetic drops before the procedure.
  - In preparation for the injection, the eye area is carefully monitored by recording the activity of the muscle using electrodes placed on your forehead. This allows accurate location of the injection site in the eye muscle. The monitoring machine makes a noise to indicate the muscle has been found. You will then need to lie still on a reclining chair for a couple of minutes while the injection is given.
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- After the injection you should not need to wear an eye patch. You will be asked to sit in the Orthoptic Department waiting area for five to ten minutes until we establish that you are fit enough to travel home. Drinking water will be available.
  - Please be aware you may need to be in the Orthoptic Department for up to three hours.

### **How will I feel after the procedure?**

You may feel a slight ache after the procedure. Please take care to avoid scratching or rubbing the eye after your injection as the local anaesthetic drops take approximately one hour to wear off. It is advisable to bring a pair of sunglasses with you.

### **Will I be able to drive home?**

It is not advisable to drive after your injection, so please make arrangements for somebody to collect you. You should be able to drive the next day, unless you are experiencing double vision.

### **Will I need any time off work?**

You will be able to return to work the following day unless otherwise advised by the doctor.

### **Follow up care**

We will need to see you two to three weeks after the injection, to assess the effect of the botulinum toxin injection. If the injection needs repeating, this will be arranged at your next appointment.

### **Possible complications / When should I seek medical advice?**

If you have any concerns following the injection, please contact Maidstone Orthoptic Department.

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**Please use this space to write any notes or questions you may have.**

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## Further information and advice can be obtained from:

**NHS 111**  
**NHS Choices online**

 **111**  
[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

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**Telephone:** ☎ 01622 224960 or ☎ 01892 632953

**Email:** [mtw-tr.palsoffice@nhs.net](mailto:mtw-tr.palsoffice@nhs.net)

**or visit their office** at either Maidstone or Tunbridge Wells Hospital between 9.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

You can be confident that your care will not be affected by highlighting any areas of concern or making a complaint. The Trust will retain a record of your contact, which is held separately to any medical records. If you are acting on behalf of a patient, we may need to obtain the patient's consent in order to protect patient confidentiality. More information on PALS or making a complaint can be found on the Trust's website: [www.mtw.nhs.uk](http://www.mtw.nhs.uk) or pick up a leaflet from main reception.

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