



Patient Information – Botulinum Toxin for Strabismus in Adults

This leaflet aims to answer some of the questions you might have about your procedure. Please note that it won't cover everything, as every patient and their squint is different. Miss West will discuss your particular case with you but if you are unclear about any aspect of this treatment or have any further questions, please ask.

What is Botulinum Toxin?

Botulinum toxin (also called Botox) is a medicine that can temporarily weaken muscles. For squints, it's injected into the eye muscles to help straighten the eyes.

What is the purpose of me having Botulinum toxin for my squint?

A squint is a turn or wander in an eye which may need to be corrected for several reasons, botulinum toxin injection can help:

- Assess if surgery would be beneficial for long-standing squints
- Provide additional information about a squint to help plan treatment
- Improve double vision caused by a squint
- Temporarily correct a squint when surgery is not suitable

What happens during the procedure?

Injection of botulinum toxin is performed in the minor operations suite. It takes approximately 30 minutes in total.

Miss West will explain the procedure and obtain your consent. The procedure is undertaken with you lying on the patient couch. Anaesthetic eye drops will be applied to reduce discomfort. Small electrodes may be placed on your forehead to help guide the injection. Miss West will inject the botulinum toxin into the targeted eye muscle and then hold the needle in place for 30 seconds to reduce the spread of the botulinum toxin. An antibiotic drop is given at the end of the procedure.

You should not drive after the procedure. Please arrange for someone to accompany you home.

What should we expect after the injection?

The effects usually begin 2-3 days after the injection. Maximum effect is typically seen after 1-2 weeks.

The effects generally last from a few weeks to a few months.

Are there any side effects?

Temporary more common side effects include

- Temporary reversal or change in the direction of the squint
- Temporary double vision, which is more common in teenagers and older children
- Temporary drooping of the eyelid (ptosis) on the injected side, usually resolving after a few weeks
- Slight bruising or redness of the surface of the eye (subconjunctival haemorrhage)
- Bruising around the eye affecting the eyelids, resembling a black eye
- Slight ache around the eye and eyelid immediately after the injection

These effects are usually temporary and resolve without treatment

Rare complications

- Scratch on the front of the eye (cornea) from the anaesthetic or minor injury while the eye is numb
- Very rare possibility of the needle perforating or piercing the eye
- Significant bleeding occurring around the eye, potentially causing serious eye or vision damage
- Very rarely, permanent paralysis of the injected muscle

Other considerations

- **Do not drive if you are experiencing double vision.**
- The effect of the toxin may result in an over-correction or under-correction of the squint initially. In most cases, there is gradual straightening of the eyes as the paralysis wears off
- Rarely, the change in alignment may remain after the botulinum toxin wears off
- Some patients may experience minimal or no changes to their squint despite repeated injections

It's important to note that most side effects are temporary and improve with time. The treatment is generally considered safe, with no risk to overall health or risk of developing botulism or food poisoning. Allergic reactions are rare

What follow up will I have?

A follow-up appointment will be scheduled 2-3 weeks after the injection to assess its effectiveness.