



GIG  
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University Health Board

## Patient Information

### Botulinum Toxin in Pain Therapy

#### Medical Day Case Unit/ Day Surgery Unit

You have been offered this procedure as part of your management plan which has been jointly discussed and agreed with your Consultant in Pain Medicine. Your pain is likely to respond to injection treatment if it is in a certain location in the body and is severe. Widespread or mild pain is not responding to injection treatment.

In all cases of managing chronic pain we aim at reduction of your symptoms so that you can achieve better mobility, reduce or discontinue medications, regain control of your life and improve its quality. Reduction of the severity of symptoms by 30% is considered to be successful in managing chronic pain. Pain relief procedures very seldom cure chronic pain. They help break the vicious circle of long-lasting pain symptoms but the duration of action cannot be predicted. The duration of treatment in which injection is considered appropriate will be no longer than 24 months in total.

It is also important to note that no procedure is risk free. Therefore injection treatment will not be repeated many times as the local anaesthetic and the steroid may cause side effects at the site of injection and when absorbed by the blood stream. Some of these effects include lower immunity, making you more vulnerable to infections caused by viruses and bacteria. This is specifically relevant in the current circumstances of COVID-19 pandemic.

Procedure specific risks are described in detail in the information leaflet. Please consider carefully the information provided below for the interventional procedure.

### What is Botulinum toxin?

Botulinum toxin is a medicine with ability to bind to peripheral nerve endings and produce relaxation of the muscles, reduction of sweat production, improved circulation and blocking of some chemicals which cause certain types of pain.

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

Details of your appointment will be arranged by Pain Clinic staff after your attendance at the Pain Clinic. You will be sent a letter to attend for the injection. You may eat and drink normally before your treatment. Do not put any creams or rubs on the day of your treatment. Please bring somebody with you to drive you back home. You should not have had any vaccinations or immunisations for at least 4 weeks before your appointment. You should be feeling well and not having/recovering from viral illness.

On the day of treatment please report to reception at the Medical Day Case Unit/Day Surgery Unit at the arranged time and as indicated in your letter. You should bring the list of your medication with you. You will be checked by a nurse that you are fit for the procedure. Your doctor will see you and answer any questions or queries you might be having. You will then be asked to sign your consent form.

Then you will be taken through to the treatment area, and asked to sit up or lie down on the bed/trolley. The doctor will then clean the skin with antiseptic and inject the Botulinum toxin into the affected muscle without local anaesthetic. The injection will feel cold.

For some types of nerve pain several injections will be given through a tiny needle into the skin of the affected area. This may be a little uncomfortable but it is essential that you keep still. A dressing will be placed to cover the injection sites. You will then be asked to rest for about 20 minutes. When you are feeling comfortable you will be allowed to go home. You should not self drive or use public transport. After your treatment you will be given an appointment to come back to the Pain Clinic or to speak to one of our nurses over the telephone.

## **What to expect afterwards?**

After your procedure take things easy for the rest of the day. Avoid heavy work or strenuous exercise for a few days. Do not rub or massage the treated area.

You should keep the injected site clean and dry and remove the dressing 24 hours following your injection. You are not allowed to use extreme heat such as in saunas or steam rooms for 72 hours.

There may be some discomfort at the injection site lasting for about a week.

You may have some muscle spasms in the treated area for about one week.

Continue taking your pain medication as advised by your consultant or until you feel benefit from the treatment.

## **What are the side effects / complications?**

### **Common**

- Soreness / bruising at the injection site.
- Temporary increase (up to 10 days) in pain following procedure.
- Flu-like symptoms for 3-7 days
- Temporary increase of muscle spasms
- Temporary weakness in the treated muscles

### **Rare**

- Puncture of the lung ( Pneumothorax)
- Haematoma
- Infection at the injection site
- Allergic reaction
- New pain
- Worsening pain
- Very rare
- Temporary or permanent disabling nerve damage

### **You must tell us if:**

- You may be pregnant
- You are taking warfarin / clopidogrel
- You have an allergy to medicines, foods or latex
- Your medical condition has changed since you last saw the consultant
- You suffer from epilepsy
- You suffer from diabetes
- If you have cold or temperature.
- You have been admitted to hospital
- You are a wheelchair user and you might need help with getting out of it
- You are hard of hearing/deaf
- You are partially sighted/registered blind
- You need an interpreter
- You are very nervous about needles, hospitals or medical practitioners

You will be followed by a member of our pain management team

For further information please contact:

**RGH on 01633 - 234938**

**Consultants:** Dr. T.M. Ivanova-Stoilova & Dr. S. Wartan

**NHH on 01873 732979**

**Consultants:** Dr. S. Jeffs and Dr. Joshi