Patient information factsheet

**Botulinum toxin (Botox) injections for squint**

**What is botulinum toxin (Botox)?**

Botox is a toxin, which can be used in tiny amounts to treat muscles. When injected into a muscle it blocks nerve impulses travelling to the muscle and so weakens the muscle.

**What is the reason for the botulinum toxin injection?**

The doctor or the orthoptist will discuss this with you before your Botox appointment. The injection may be to improve the position of the eyes or to check if you are at risk of double vision after an operation for a squint.

**When will I start to notice the effects?**

The effect starts to work about three days after the injection but the maximum effect is seen about one week post injection.

**How long do the effects last?**

The effects wear off completely but it takes up to three months for this to happen. Depending on the reason for the injection it may need to be repeated.

**What are the benefits?**

- Improves position of the eyes without the need for squint surgery in some cases
- No need for general anaesthetic
- Quick procedure

**What are the risks and side effects?**

- Some patients develop double vision after the injection for up to a few weeks
- Occasionally the lid may droop for up to a few weeks
- May not fully correct the squint
- Not always effective, the injection may need to be repeated
- Rarely the injection needle may penetrate the eye and affect vision.

**What will happen on the day of my appointment?**

Book in as normal in the orthoptic department, your appointment will usually be between 8.45-9.00am.
You may see an Orthoptist first. Anaesthetic drops are then put into your eye to be injected.

A nurse will then call you through to have the injection. You will lie down on a couch and they will place small recording pads onto your face. These will be attached to a special machine that detects electrical signals from the muscle. The signals help to locate the muscle that is to be injected, allowing accurate placement of the Botox.

Once the needle has located the muscle to be injected the machine will make a buzzing noise. You may feel a small amount of discomfort as the Botox is injected into the muscle.

After your injection we advise you to sit in the waiting area for half an hour.

If this is your first injection, we will arrange an appointment to see you 2 weeks after the injection.

**What happens after the injections?**

There is no change immediately.

It is quite common for your eye to be deviated the opposite way for a few weeks and it may not have full movement but as the Botox wears off, these effects will disappear.

You are likely to have a red eye after the procedure.

Please feel free to contact the orthoptic department if you have any queries on:

023 8079 4789

For a translation of this document, an interpreter or a version in large print, Braille or on audio tape, please telephone 023 8079 4688.