

## ***Patient Information Sheet*** ***Botulinum Toxin A***

As we age our skin changes, the main changes seen are skin sagging, appearance of fine wrinkle lines and deepening of facial animation lines.

How quickly these changes take place depend upon various factors – smoking, exposure to ultraviolet radiation (sun), environmental pollution, skin care routine, pattern of facial expression and genes.

Botulinum Toxin A injections offer a safe, quick and effective way of reducing the impact facial animation lines and in some cases completely eliminating them.

We hope that this fact sheet will provide many of the answers to the questions you may have about Toxin A injections for facial animation lines.

### **Why do these animation lines appear?**

The muscles that allow us to produce facial expressions are attached to the skin at various points. As we make these expressions the muscles pull on the skin causing the appearance of animation lines. The facial expressions we produce are predetermined during late childhood and are subconsciously carried out throughout adulthood. The repetitive action of these muscles on the skin causes the animation lines to deepen with time.

### **What is Botulinum Toxin A?**

There are no animal products in the injection. The injection does contain a small amount of human albumin.

### **How does it work?**

Botulinum Toxin A works by blocking the release of an enzyme at the junction of the nerve and muscle. This means that the underlying muscle will no longer respond to signals from the brain and remain relaxed. So when Botulinum Toxin A is injected into a muscle, that muscle in effect becomes paralysed and as it can no longer move animation lines cannot be formed.

### **What can it be used for?**

There are four sets of animation lines that can be effectively treated by Botulinum Toxin A injections, these are:

- Horizontal lines on the forehead – produced when a person raises the brow
- Vertical lines between the eyes (frown lines) – produced when a person frowns
- Horizontal lines just above the nose (crunch lines) – produced when a person squints
- Lines around the eyes (crow's feet) – produced when a person squints or smiles

### **How effective is it?**

In clinical trials in the USA the treatment consistently produces high satisfaction scores – with 80% - 90% of patients being satisfied with the results of the treatment. Based on these results the treatment has now got FDA approval in the USA and is licensed in the UK to treat crunch lines above the nose.

Some patients will not get as good a response on the first occasion because of an inadequate dose – subsequent doses can be adjusted to allow for this. As with all medical treatments it is possible that not everyone will respond to treatment. Some patients may obtain a less than average response or may not respond at all.

### **How quickly will it work?**

It can take 3 to 14 days for the effects of the injection to reach a maximum, so you may not notice any improvements until that time.

### **How long will it last?**

The blockage and therefore the paralysis of the muscles are only temporary, the nerve forms new nerve endings with the passage of time and so the muscle gradually regains its movement. By about 4 to 6 months the muscle paralysis is completely reversed and the muscle returns to normal function. The effect on the animation lines can therefore last up to 4 to 6 months, the lines will slowly become noticeable towards the end of this period.

**Can I repeat the treatment?**

Yes it is safe to repeat the treatment as the effects wear off. In the first year many people will have three treatments thereafter treatments will normally be only required every 6 months. We would not recommend repeating a treatment for at least 3 months.

You can use Botulinum Toxin A in conjunction with other treatments – such as N-Lite, cosmetic fillers and dermabrasion. In some cases it may even enhance the effects of these treatments.

**How is the treatment done?**

Using very fine needles small amounts of Botulinum Toxin A are injected into the relevant muscles. Depending on the area you are having treated this may involve up to 13 multiple injections.

**Is it painful?**

As we use very fine needles to inject small amounts of Botulinum Toxin A into or around the muscles, this causes only a slight stinging sensation at most.

**How long will it take?**

This will depend on the number of areas requiring treatment – even if we treat all the muscles around the eye and in the forehead this would take no more than 15 minutes.

**What side effects will I see?**

Immediately after treatment you may get some bleeding at the injection site – this usually stops within a few minutes with the application of pressure. Afterwards some people will experience bruising and swelling at the sites injected this usually settles within a few days.

Another side effect often quoted but rarely seen is droopy eyelids (ptosis), this occurs if the injections are placed too close to the eyebrows or if toxin works its way down to the muscles of the top eyelid. This causes a temporary paralysis of the muscles of the top eyelid preventing them from being fully opened. It is not harmful but can be unsightly, however it would improve within 4 to 6 weeks.

**What do I need to do before any treatment?**

No special preparations are required before treatment; we will however ask you to remove any make up from the area to be injected. Avoiding aspirin and anti-inflammatory drugs such as Ibuprofen (neurofen) a couple days before treatment may reduce the risk of bruising, but this is not essential.

**What precautions do I take after?**

It is also important that you do not rub or massage the injection sites and avoid strenuous exercise for up to 4 hours after the treatment. It is also helpful if you do not lie down or fly for 4 hours after the treatment. Any of these things can move the Botulinum Toxin A around in the muscles and cause unwanted paralysis.

**Can anyone have treatment?**

In keeping with other non-essential cosmetic treatments we would not recommend women who are pregnant or breast-feeding to have Botulinum Toxin A injections. We would not recommend treatment to people with muscles disorders or bleeding disorders. People on anticoagulants (warfarin or sinthrome) and certain antibiotics (gentamicin) should also avoid treatment. Otherwise anyone else can have the treatment

**How much will it cost?**

The cost of your treatment will depend on how much of it we use. This will be based on the number of injections and strength required to achieve the desired effect. This is difficult to judge without seeing you, but the receptionists would be able to give you a rough idea of the costs involved. Once we have seen and assessed you we will be able to give a much more accurate figure.

**About the clinic**

Laserase Bolton has been based at the hospital in Bolton since 1994. Throughout, we have been fully registered with the appropriate governing body who inspects our clinic regularly. You have the reassurance that your treatment will be carried out either by a fully qualified and experienced doctor or nurse. All of our doctors and nurses have extensive training and experience and they attend training and CPD courses

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