



## botox (*botulinum toxin*)

When considering cosmetic surgery, it is important that you are fully informed on all aspects of the procedure that you are seeking.

### What is Botox?

Botox is the name of botulinum toxin type A that is manufactured by a company called Allergan. The first cosmetic use of Botox was carried out in 1990 although it has been used since 1982 to treat strabismus. For cosmetic use it is injected into facial muscles that are hyperactive. This has the effect of putting the muscle into 'hibernation' for about 4 to 6 months, which causes a smoothing effect of the wrinkles that have been created by the muscle activity.

It is also used to weaken the muscles that cause the face to pull downwards, thus giving a temporary lift. Botox has been researched for use on the muscles of the face and has been found to be very effective. Although the effect does unfortunately wear off, the research has shown that the Botox effect lasts longer after repeated treatments.

### Some of the medical uses for Botox

#### Blepharospasm

This was the first clinical use of Botox; blepharospasm is the involuntary closure of the eyelid, which can sometimes spread to other facial groups. The Botox injection in this case stops the spasm from happening for the duration of its effect.

#### Dystonia

Dystonia is any involuntary spasm of a muscle and it can occur in the neck, limbs and larynx. The Botox is used to alleviate the symptoms and has been found to be very effective in some cases.

#### Headache

There are new treatments for migraine and headaches; some patients who have Botox for purely cosmetic reasons have found that their headaches can improve.

#### Excessive sweating

Some patients from as early as the teen years can suffer from a great deal of sweating. This can occur in the palms, the armpit and face. Botox has been found to be very effective for this condition.



# Profile

cosmetic surgery

## **Risk and side effects**

Although Botox is a toxin, it is used in doses much smaller than those that can cause harm to the body. There is often a little localised swelling after the injection but this generally disappears within a few hours. Occasionally there can be a little bruising if a small blood vessel is pierced. There are a few cases where Botox has had no effect at all.

It is essential to consult your practitioner for an initial assessment before undergoing treatment. However, it is usually accepted practice to consult and treat a patient on the same day and most patients can go straight back to work without anyone knowing that they have had Botox treatment.

This advice is not intended to be personal advice and is provided as information only. You must always consult with a suitably qualified practitioner to obtain personal advice.