

Botulinum toxin follow-up clinic for the treatment of blepharospasm, hemi-facial spasm and facial palsies

Information for patients

Blepharospasm

Blepharospasm is involuntary eye closure caused by spasm of the muscles surrounding the eyes. A 'tic', twitching, or frequent blinking is typical, sometimes with complete closure of the lids.

The severity of blepharospasm varies. It is usually better in the morning, becoming worse later in the day. Bright light, walking, driving, worry or stress makes it worse. It usually develops gradually over a few years. The cause is not known, but it's thought to be caused by an abnormality or damage in the area of the brain dealing with the control of movement.

Hemi-facial Spasm

Hemi-facial spasm is a condition where muscles on one side of the face twitch or flicker, often starting around the eye. The twitching can then spread to other muscles, involving the mouth and neck. The condition tends to become worse with tiredness or stress. The cause of hemi-facial spasm is thought to be irritation of the facial nerve due to pressure from a blood vessel.

Facial palsies

There are occasions when Botulinum toxin can be given to manage facial palsies which are a weakness to the facial muscles. This is a result of nerve damage caused by trauma or disease such as stroke or Bell's palsy, when a facial nerve is either non-functioning or damaged. The ophthalmic consultant will oversee this treatment.

Treatment with botulinum toxin

Botulinum toxin injections are given in tiny doses, just under the skin in the affected areas. The effect of the treatment is to weaken the muscles responsible for the contractions. This provides relief for approximately three months, so a regular programme of treatment is required.

Botulinum toxin follow-up clinic

This outpatient clinic is for patients who are already established on treatment and who would like the flexibility of being able to request follow-up treatment when they feel they need it. The clinic is run by a specialist nurse practitioner at the Eye Hospital.

The purpose of the clinic is to improve the service to our patients by:

- reducing waiting times in clinic
- making it easier for you to get an appointment
- providing continuity because you will always see the same specialist nurse
- giving you information and support via the helpline
- counselling

Follow up appointment

After your initial consultation with the doctor and when you have had your first treatment, you will be booked a follow up appointment for assessment and repeat treatments as required. The Botulinum Nurse Practitioners are available to answer any queries via the helpline.

Tel: **01865234567** pick option 1, then option 1 and ask to speak to the Botulinum Nurse Practitioner

Nurse-led Botulinum Toxin Clinic

Outpatients Department

Oxford Eye Hospital

Level LG1

West Wing

John Radcliffe Hospital

Further information

The Dystonia Society website has more information about this treatment:

<http://www.dystonia.org.uk/about-dystonia-page6792.html>

Further information

If you would like an interpreter, please speak to the department where you are being seen.

Please also tell them if you would like this information in another format, such as:

- Easy Read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronic
- another language.

We have tried to make the information in this leaflet meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They are happy to help.

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Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
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