

What is Botulinum Toxin Type A?

Botulinum Toxin Type A (Botox[®] Azzalure[®] Bocouture[®]) uses the toxin produced by the bacteria responsible for botulism in food poisoning. However, the amount of toxin used for cosmetic treatments is minimal and generally well tolerated in clinical trials.

What is Botulinum Toxin Type A used for?

Botulinum Toxin Type A is used for the temporary improvement of dynamic facial expression lines. Static facial lines, e.g. those due to sun damage, will not usually respond to treatment with botulinum toxin, as they are not caused by muscle activity.

It is commonly used to treat:

- Frown lines
- Worry lines
- Crows feet
- Lip lines
- Downturned mouth
- Gummy smile
- Neck lines/bands
- Hyperhidrosis (excessive sweating)

Botox[®] and Bocouture[®] are both licensed for treatment of moderate to severe frown lines, Crow's feet and forehead lines. Azzalure[®] is licensed for us on moderate to severe frown lines and Crow's feet.

Your practitioner will discuss which treatment options are best for you, providing you with alternatives, where necessary, including the option for no treatment.

How is Botulinum Toxin Type A administered?

Tiny doses of this botulinum toxin are injected just under the skin, using a small needle, into the muscles that are responsible for creating the lines.

How does Botulinum Toxin Type A work?

Botulinum toxin specifically blocks the nerve impulse, allowing these muscles responsible for the excessive contractions that cause wrinkles to relax.

How long does Botulinum Toxin Type A take to work? And how long does it last?

You should notice improvements in the appearance of lines treated with botulinum toxin up to a week following treatment. You'll be invited for a review appointment 2 weeks following your initial treatment. During this review appointment, you may/may not need an adjustment dose as decided following examination. The full effect can take up to 30 days.

The effects of botulinum toxin last between 3 and 6 months, with the gradual return of muscle movement during this period. The time it takes for botulinum toxin to take effect and wear off differs between individuals, the brand used, the condition of the skin, the amount of product injected, injection technique and lifestyle factors such as UV exposure, smoking and exercise.

What makes me suitable for Botulinum Toxin Type A treatments?

You are a suitable candidate for botulinum toxin injections if the severity of your lines has an important/significant psychological impact on you, you have no medical contraindications and your practitioner has deemed you a good candidate for treatment.

Who is NOT suitable for Botulinum Toxin Type A treatments?

Treatment is not recommended if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.



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It's important that you provide a full medical history to your practitioner as there are certain conditions which mean treatments with botulinum toxin is not appropriate for you, including, but not limited to:

- Certain neuromuscular disorders, such as myasthenia gravis
- Those taking certain muscle relaxants or antibodies, such as aminoglycosides
- Those with bleeding disorders
- Those with history of dysphagia (difficulty to swallow) and/or impaired swallowing
- Those with infections at the proposed site of injection
- Those who are undergoing, or who completed a course of Roaccutane, in the last 6 months.

What should I do following treatment?

For at least 4 hours after treatment keep upright.

For 12 hours after treatment avoid extreme facial expressions, intense exercise, avoid alcohol, don't wear makeup.

For 2 days after treatment do not rub or massage the treated area, as this may cause the botulinum toxin to spread to nearby muscles.

For 2 weeks after treatment avoid exposure to strong sunlight, cold temperatures and saunas.

Do not have any beauty treatments on your face.

What are the risks and side effects of Botulinum Toxin Type A treatments?

Like all medicines, botulinum toxin can have side effects, although not everybody has them. In general, side effects occur within the first few days following injection. They usually last only for a short time, but they may last for several months and in rare cases, longer. These adverse reactions may be related to treatment, injection technique or both. Diffusion of botulinum toxin into nearby muscles is possible when high doses are injected, particularly in the neck area. As expected for any injection procedure, pain/burning/stinging, swelling and/or bruising may be associated with the injection. Speak to your practitioner if you are worried about this. The chance of having a side effect is described by the following categories:

Common - may affect up to 1 in 10 people

Headaches, skin redness, localised muscle weakness, face pain, skin redness and/or tightness, localised injection site bruising and/or bleeding, redness.

Where both forehead lines and frown lines are treated together, ptosis (drooping eyelid) is a common side effect. Normally these reactions are mild to moderate, reversible and occur in the first week after treatment.

Uncommon - may affect up to 1 in 100 people: skin tightness, anxiety, numbness, dizziness, inflammation of the eyelid, eye pain, visual disturbance, swelling (face, around the eyes), skin sensitivity to light, dry skin, itching, eyelid swelling, feeling sick, dry mouth, muscle twitching, fever, flu manifestations, feeling weak, injection site pain/tingling/numbness.

The following list describes additional side effects have been reported for botulinum toxin for any treatment (medicinal and cosmetic):

Allergic reactions, which can be serious (swelling of the face and airways, difficulty in breathing), loss of nerve supply to/shrinkage of injected muscle, respiratory depression and/or respiratory failure, aspiration pneumonia (lung inflammation caused by accidentally breathing in food, drink, saliva or vomit), chronic disease affecting the muscles (myasthenia gravis), blurred vision, difficulties in seeing clearly, sensitivity to light, eye pain, inflammation of the eyelid, slurred speech, strabismus (squint), numbness, tingling and pain in hands and feet, fainting, pain/numbness/or weakness starting from the spine, drooping of the muscles on one side of the face, weakness of the face muscles, difficulty moving the arm and shoulder, decreased skin sensation, muscle pain, abdominal pain, diarrhoea, vomiting, loss of appetite, dry mouth, feeling sick, fever, different types of red blotchy skin rashes, feeling generally unwell, speech problems, itching, excessive sweating, hair loss, loss of eyebrows, decreased hearing, noises in the ear, feeling of dizziness or "spinning" (vertigo).



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What should I do if I suffer side effects?

Report any symptoms to your practitioner as soon as you experience them. They will be best placed to provide you with aftercare and advice. If you have any difficulty in breathing, swallowing or speaking after receiving botulinum toxin, contact your doctor immediately. If you experience hives, swelling including swelling of the face or throat, wheezing, feeling faint and shortness of breath, contact your doctor immediately.

Report any side effects here: www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard

For more information, please ask your practitioner for the Patient Information Leaflet relating to your treatment.

Botulinum toxin is a prescription only medicine (POM) and should only be administered by medically qualified practitioners with appropriate qualifications and expertise in this treatment, using the required equipment.

What are alternatives to botulinum toxin treatments?

There are many alternatives to botulinum toxin treatments, depending on your particular aesthetic concerns and reasons for seeking treatment. Alternatives include, but are not limited to, microneedling, chemical peels, device-based skin tightening (e.g. HIFU, RF, IPL), laser resurfacing, cosmetic surgery or no treatment. Your practitioner will be able to discuss alternative treatments with you during your consultation.

