

BOTULINUM TOXIN INJECTION FOR OVERACTIVE BLADDER (OAB)

Overactive bladder is common in women particularly after the menopause. The exact cause is unknown but it is more common in women who have had children and after menopause. Most women will respond to simple measures with physiotherapy and medications (see OAB patient information sheet).

Some women however require further treatment such as Botulium toxin injections.

Who is suitable for botulinum toxin injections?

To prescribe botulinum toxin injections there are certain criteria that must be met:

- Over 18 years of age.
- Not responding to treatment with at least 2 different medications in combination with bladder retraining techniques by a specialist physiotherapist.
- At least 14 episodes of urinary incontinence per week.
- Urodynamics confirmed overactive bladder/urge incontinence and normal voiding.
- Be willing and able to self catheterise (pass a catheter/tube into the bladder themselves) if this is required after the botulinum toxin treatment.

How is the botulinum toxin injection performed?

The injection is usually performed under local anaesthetic. A small tube (catheter) is inserted into the bladder and local anaesthetic is instilled into the bladder and held for 20 minutes.

A cystoscope (small medical telescope) is then passed into the bladder and the injections are performed in 20-30 sites all around the bladder. Generally women find this uncomfortable but it only takes 10-15 minutes to perform.

You will then be required to pass urine and can go home immediately. If you do require a general anaesthetic or sedation, you will require a longer time in hospital and will need someone to drive you home.

Remember to drink more water in the first 2 days after the procedure.

What to expect after Botulinum toxin injection.

The effect of the treatment can take a few days to weeks to work. Then try coming off the medications for you bladder. Some women will still need some medications for their overactive bladder symptoms.

You may find it more difficult to pass urine after treatment. Remember to sit comfortably on the toilet, feet flat on the floor and lean forward with your elbows on your knees.

You will be prescribed a course of antibiotics to take for 1 week after the procedure.

The effect of the treatment last 6-12 months and is then repeated if you have found the treatment to be successful.

What are the risks?

In some women the injections are not effective and they continue to have urinary leakage. Further injections cannot be prescribed if the treatment has not been effective.

Urinary tract infections can occur and may feel different after the botulinum toxin injection. If you notice pain, discomfort, increased urination or bleeding in the weeks or months after the injection, have a urine sample checked with your local doctor.

Urinary retention can occur after the botulinum toxin injection (about 5%). Most women do not fully empty their bladder after the treatment and this is fine unless there are symptoms of urine infection or if you are unable to pass urine at all. This may then require you to pass a catheter into the bladder yourself, until the effect wears off.

If you have concerns following the surgery, please phone Dr Higgs' rooms on 07 53155361 or contact Buderim Private Hospital (07 5430 3303) and ask to speak to a nurse on the surgical ward (Ward 1A or 4B).