

Botulinum Treatment

What is botulinum toxin?

Botulinum toxin is a natural protein that relaxes muscles, leaving the overlying skin smoother and less wrinkled. Brand names are Botox, Dysport and Xeomin. Botox is registered for the treatment of frown lines, horizontal forehead lines, and crow's feet. Dysport and Xeomin are registered for frown lines. All brands can also be used under Section 29 of the Medicines Act to smooth the chin, release mouth corners, improve the jawline and slim the lower face.

Is Botox safe?

The safety profile of botulinum toxin is excellent. It has been used internationally for around 30 years. Only 36 cases of adverse effects associated with the cosmetic use of Botox were reported to the U. S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) between 1989 and 2003.

What does botulinum toxin do?

Botox treatment softens wrinkles and releases the downward pull of selected muscles, resulting in a more pleasant expression with fewer lines. At Gold Coast Plastic Surgery we favour a natural look and will personalise your treatment to retain warmth and character in your face. It takes 1-3 days for Botox to start working and 2 weeks to be fully effective. A full-dose treatment lasts 3-4 months. Areas treated lightly for a natural effect may wear off more quickly. After 2-3 years of regular treatments, your botulinum toxin may last longer.

Who should not have treatment with botulinum toxin?

You should not have treatment if you are pregnant or breast-feeding, have an infection at the treatment site or have myasthenia gravis or motor neurone disease.

Are there any possible side effects?

You may experience a **bruise** or slight **tenderness** where the needle has been introduced. A **headache** on the day of treatment, or, very rarely, **prolonged headache** or **flu-like symptoms** have been reported. Rarely, botulinum toxin can migrate and cause unwanted weakness in nearby muscles. This is always **temporary** and wears off over 2-8 weeks. The effect of unwanted **weakness** differs, according to the area treated and muscle affected. Possibilities include:

- **Frown and forehead lines:** Eyelid or eyebrow droop.
- **Crow's feet:** Double vision, dry eyes.
- **Lips:** Difficulty whistling, drinking through a straw or sipper bottle.
- **Mouth frown, chin, gummy smile, bunny lines:** Uneven or altered smile.
- **Neck:** Uneven smile, neck weakness, difficulty swallowing with high doses.
- **Facial slimming:** Narrowed smile, reduced bite strength, fatigue when chewing, exacerbation of jowls.

What should I do after my treatment?

1. To reduce bruising, avoid anything that makes your face red and hot, such as saunas, intense exercise and excess alcohol, for the rest of the day after treatment.
2. Avoid strong rubbing or massage (e.g. facials) in the area for four hours following treatment.
3. Avoid brow waxing or tattooing for two weeks.
4. You may wear makeup and cleanse your face as normal.
5. We suggest a follow-up appointment in 2-3 weeks to review your result.