

Botulinum Toxin Injection for Trigger Points

Patient Information Sheet

1. What are Trigger Points?

Trigger points are very tender areas within muscles, muscle linings, or where tendons attach. They are commonly defined as areas of taut muscle bands or palpable knots of the muscle which are painful. When pressure is applied to a trigger point, the pain may be felt at the site (positive “jump sign”) or it may transfer pain to another part of the body, sometimes mimicking the pain people feel from nerves being pinched in their neck or low back. Trigger points may occur due to excessive or repetitive physical activity, fatigue, or trauma. Once they develop, they can recur with exertion or inactivity of the muscle, overstretching, exposure to cold or damp weather, or psychologically stressful situations.

2. What are Botox Injections?

Botulinum toxin has been frequently used to treat such conditions of severe muscle spasticity. It has proven useful in treating myofascial pain, when extended relief is not obtained from simple trigger point injections. Injection of the toxin into the muscle can promote muscle relaxation for up to 6 months. Murphy Pain Center uses one of two forms of botulinum toxin: Botox or MyoBlock.

Note: The procedure can not be performed if you have an active infection, flu, cold, fever, very high blood pressure, or if you are on blood thinners. Please make your doctor aware of any of these conditions. *This is for your safety!*

3. What are the risks of the procedure?

Risks are remote but include bleeding, infection, nerve injury, and allergic reaction to the medication.

Some short-term side effects may occur. If local anesthetic spreads to nearby nerves you may have weakness or numbness that can last for 1 – 2 hours. If this happens you will have to stay in the Murphy Pain Center until this resolves. You may have increased pain for a few days after the injection. You may feel mild “flu-like” symptoms for a few days, and rarely, up to a few weeks.

4. Will the injection hurt a lot?

Most people say the stinging/burning of the numbing medicine is the most uncomfortable part of the procedure though every person’s response to any procedure is different.

5. How do I get the Botox medication?

When your procedure is ordered you will be given a prescription to take to your local pharmacy so they can order the medication for you, please make sure to bring the medication with you the day of the injection.

6. What happens during the actual procedure?

After signing a consent form and checking your blood pressure you will be brought back to one of the procedure rooms. The back or neck is then cleansed with alcohol and a drape is placed to protect your clothing. The physician will palpate (feel) your back to determine where the knots of muscle are and will inject small amounts of Botox solution through multiple injections. You may receive anywhere

from one to twenty small injections depending on the size of the area being treated. A very fine needle is used. Your skin will be cleansed. Your vital signs will be checked. You will be escorted to the recovery area where you will be offered something to eat and drink. You will be monitored in the recovery area for 15 minutes. Your pain level will be re-assessed prior to you leaving. You will then be discharged to leave with your ride.

7. How will I feel after the injection?

Most people don't feel any different immediately after the injection though the pain may be temporarily improved or worsened. The botulinum toxin can take up to three weeks to attain its full affect. Therefore, it may be a while before you feel a change in you pain.

Some local tenderness may be experienced for a couple of days after the injection. You will be given instructions on the use of ice and heat at your discharge to help minimize this discomfort. You may take your usual pain medications as well after the injection. You may feel mild "flu-like" symptoms for a few days, and rarely, up to a few weeks.

8. Will I have any restrictions on the day of the procedure?

Do not eat or drink for 6 hours prior to the procedure. You may take your medications for blood pressure or heart with a sip of water. You may also take your pain medication with a sip of water if you are able to tolerate it on an empty stomach. **If you are DIABETIC, you will need to contact the office prior to your** procedure for instructions, unless you received instructions when you scheduled the appointment.

You may not drive for the remainder of the day after your procedure. An adult must be present to drive you home or to go with you in a taxi or on public transportation. **The procedure will be canceled if you don't have a responsible adult with you!!! This is for your safety.**

No heat is to be used in the injected area for the remainder of the day.

No tub bath or soaking in water (i.e. pool, jacuzzi, etc.) for the remainder of the day.

You may return to eating and drinking as usual after your procedure.

9. For what reasons should I call the Murphy Pain Center after the injection?

If you experience severe back pain, new numbness or weakness of your legs, loss of control of your bowels or bladder, or signs of infection in the area of the injection, you should call the Murphy Pain Center right away at 502-736-3636.

References: Harvard Medical School-Brigham and Women's Hospital Pain Management Center.

<http://www.hmcnet.harvard.edu/brighampain/padmin/botox.html>

Baptist Hospital East: Health Information – Trigger Point Injections

<http://www.baptisteast.com/PMG006.cfm>

Tyler Neurosurgical Associates, P.A.

<http://www.tylerneuro.com/tpi.htm>