

Treatment of spasticity and dystonia with botulinum toxin

About botulinum toxin

Botulinum toxin can be used to treat localized spasticity effectively.

That could be in the treatment of spasticity around the shoulder joint, elbow joint, wrist, finger joints or ankle among others.

During the treatment, patients often experience an increase in mobility and a decrease in pain.

About spasticity

- Spasticity is a frequent symptom after damage to the brain.
- Spasticity is seen as an increased muscle stiffness that increases with rapid stretching.
- Spasticity is often accompanied by paralysis and coordination disorders.
- Spasticity and the paralysis often lead to long-term changes in the form of contractures with permanent muscle- and connective tissue shrinkage.
- Spasticity leads to varying degrees of pain and loss of function with reduced mobility, poor sitting- and lying positions and difficulties in terms of maintaining personal hygiene.

Treatment with botulinum toxin

The botulinum toxin is injected into the spastic muscles (normally 2-3 muscles pr. Treatment only).

During the treatment, the connection between the nerve and the muscle is blocked. This means, that part of the muscle is paralyzed.

The paralysis, and thereby the effect, starts occurring during a week. The effect lasts for 8-12 weeks – for some patients even longer.

When the effect subsides, the treatment has to be repeated in most cases.

Risks and side effects

Unease

The treatment is mostly without side effects apart from a slight unease in connection with injection of the substance.

In seldom cases serious side effects have been seen as a result of the botulinum toxin spreading to surrounding muscles.