Let's Talk About...

Botox® for Torticollis

What is Botox and how does it work?

Botox is a medicine that loosens muscles so they are not too tight. This can help with muscle spasticity. Usually, the Botox shot is given with a small needle into a muscle. Botox starts to help about 1 to 2 weeks after the shot and lasts for about 3 to 6 months.

What can Botox do for my child?

Botox is used to treat the tight muscles in your child's neck. This helps your child in many ways. The tight muscles in your child's neck will become easier to stretch. Your child will be able to move her neck more freely and muscles on the weak side of her neck will get stronger. Botox works differently in each child. Botox effects are temporary. It works best if your child also has other treatments such as stretching, strengthening and positioning exercises. A Tubular Orthosis for Torticollis. (T.O.T) collar may also be helpful.

How will my child receive Botox?

Usually, the doctor will inject Botox into the tight muscle. These injections feel much like immunizations, but they don't cause muscle aches. Many kids say they feel a sting or a pinch when they receive Botox. Young children who receive Botox for torticollis usually receive medicine that makes them sleep during the procedure. This is helpful because your child can receive several shots all at once and she will be perfectly still so the doctor can give the shots in just the right place.

Are there any risks or side effects from Botox?

Botox is safe. Even if a child receives Botox several times, the effects don't last long and they do not last. There are some side effects, though, such as bleeding or bruising where your child receives the shot. Botox can also cause weakness in the muscle where the shot was given. Rarely, children have a rash in that area or they feel sick, like they have the flu, for a day or two. You should seek medical attention right away if your child has trouble swallowing, talking, breathing, or your child's muscles are weak and the weakness is not near the place where the shot was given.

What happens after the Botox injection?

Your child may do her normal activities right after receiving Botox. Remember, Botox effects only last 3 to 6 months. It is very important for you child to do neck exercises during this time. You will learn the exercises from your child's therapist before she receives Botox. Your child should return for a follow-up appointment 4 to 6 weeks after the procedure. The doctor will measure the results of the Botox and help you plan what to do next.

Intermountain Primary Children's Medical Center
Healing for life℠

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