

Spasticity Management Information for Clients and Families

Initial Assessment:

The Spasticity Management Clinic is a service for children and youth with spasticity or dystonia who exhibit changes in muscle tone (often related to cerebral palsy, acquired brain injury or spinal cord injury). The clinic team works with children and their families to learn how spasticity (muscle stiffness) affects their comfort, care, daily activities and participation.

After a comprehensive team assessment, treatment options recommended may include:

- Splinting, serial casting or orthotics
- Botulinum Toxin A (Botox®) injections
- Use of oral medications
- Referral for other specialty assessment (orthopedic surgery, intrathecal baclofen, selective dorsal rhizotomy)

This service works in conjunction with the local team providers (OT, PT, Physician) to ensure monitoring and follow up.

Referral:

A physician's referral is required to attend Spasticity Management Clinic.

Botulinum Toxin A:

This is a medication commonly known as Botox ®. It helps to relax stiff muscles by blocking the message at the muscle junction. It is given by injection into targeted muscles. Botox ® is used with the intention of increasing mobility, relieving pain, maximizing comfort, ease care giving and to facilitate muscle strengthening. The goals of injection are determined together by the clinic team, child and family, and local team providers after a comprehensive assessment. Each child's goals are independent and will determine what type of intervention is appropriate after injection.

Prior to Injection of Botulinum Toxin A:

Your child will be assessed prior to Botox® injections. This will help the clinic team and your local providers know how your child is functioning before the injections and measure the impact of the Botox ®. This assessment can help create goals and a treatment plan with your child's providers. Depending on the goals, a treatment plan may consist of a home program, intervention visits with the physiotherapist or occupational therapist, and/or casting and splinting. Not all Botox® injections require Episodic Intervention sessions.

Injection of Botulinum Toxin A:

In York Region, Botox® injections occur at the Richmond Hill Location. In Simcoe County, they may occur at the Barrie Common Roof location or at Orillia Soldiers Memorial Hospital (if sedation is required). Your Spasticity Management Clinic Team will discuss your child's options.

Botox® starts to work 3 to 7 days after injection. The maximum effect is often noted at 2 to 3 weeks with results gradually wearing off after three to six months. Children should return to their regular activities and wear orthotics as usual unless advised otherwise.

One Week to 4 months After Injection of Botulinum Toxin A:

If appropriate, a post intervention plan may begin based on the functional needs and goals for your child. Strengthening, range of motion, and/or motor skills training may be indicated. As a part of the intervention plan, your therapist will instruct you in a home program for your child. To maximize the benefits of the Botox® injections, it is essential that families are able to complete this program. Families should be ready to commit one half to one hour daily for stretching and strengthening exercises. Repetition and practice are most important in order to gain and maintain a new skill so daily practice via home program is important. If casting or splinting is part of the treatment plan your therapists will speak with you about schedules and cast progressions as appropriate.

If needed, your child may also have scheduled episodic intervention sessions with a physiotherapist, occupational therapist, and/or rehabilitation assistant. This typically occurs following a child's first round of injections or if repeated injections are accompanied by a change in goals and a new home program requires instruction for the family. When repeated injections to the same muscles occur and the goals remain unchanged, regular intervention sessions are not required and your child should continue with their home program.

Four to Six Months After injection of Botulinum Toxin A:

If episodic intervention sessions have occurred, they will no longer be necessary at this time. Family coaching may continue if your child is continuing to make gains toward established goals. The home program of stretching and strengthening should continue.

Repeated Botulinum Toxin A Injections:

Results from the initial Botox® intervention may determine if repeat injections are an appropriate course of treatment. Your child will be reassessed at Spasticity Management Clinic and a plan will be developed with you.