

## Botulinum toxin A for treating cervical dystonia

### WHAT DOES THE GUIDANCE SAY?

Botulinum toxin A (Botox) is recommended for listing on the Medication Assistance Fund (MAF) for government subsidy for adults with cervical dystonia.

### WHAT IS CERVICAL DYSTONIA?

Cervical dystonia is a painful movement disorder that causes the muscles in the neck to abnormally contract, affecting the position of the head. The head often tilts or twists to one side. Difficulties in controlling the position of the head can cause severe pain and discomfort, headaches and muscle spasms.

### WHAT IS BOTULINUM TOXIN A?

You may know botulinum toxin A as Botox<sup>®</sup>, Dysport<sup>®</sup> or Xeomin<sup>®</sup>. It is given as a series of injections to help relax muscle contractions.

### HOW MUCH BOTULINUM TOXIN A CAN I TAKE?

Your doctor will administer botulinum toxin A injections at affected areas at the required dose. The effects of the injection will start to work within a few days.

Muscle relaxation typically lasts for around 3 months and treatment is repeated when symptoms return.

### HOW LONG SHOULD I TAKE IT?

As cervical dystonia is a life-long condition for most patients, treatment with botulinum toxin A is usually continued for as long as the patient continues to have a good response.

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### WHO CAN HAVE BOTULINUM TOXIN A?

Adults can apply for botulinum toxin A (Botox) through MAF if they have cervical dystonia.

Your doctor can advise if botulinum toxin A is a suitable treatment for you.

### WHY WAS BOTULINUM TOXIN A RECOMMENDED FOR MAF?

ACE evaluates how well a treatment works in relation to how much it costs compared to other treatments. Botulinum toxin A (Botox) was recommended for subsidy because its benefit in relieving symptoms and improving quality of life for adults with cervical dystonia justifies its cost.

The other brands of botulinum toxin A (Dysport and Xeomin) were not recommended for subsidy.

### WHAT DOES LISTING ON THE MAF MEAN FOR ME?

The MAF helps people pay for expensive treatments that are clinically necessary. If your doctor prescribes botulinum toxin type A (Botox) for you, and you meet the MAF criteria, your treatment cost will be subsidised by 40% to 75%.

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