

## Plain English Summary

# Botulinum toxin A for treating adults with focal spasticity of the lower limbs associated with stroke

## What does the guidance say?

Botulinum toxin type A (Botox) is recommended for listing on the Medication Assistance Fund (MAF) for government subsidy for treating adults with focal spasticity of the lower limbs due to stroke.

Botulinum toxin type A (Botox) has previously been listed on the MAF for treating adults with focal spasticity of the upper limbs due to stroke.

Other brands of botulinum toxin type A are not recommended for subsidy.

## What is focal spasticity?

Focal spasticity is a movement disorder which causes certain muscles to be tight or stiff as a result of damage to the nervous system. It causes pain and deformity, and can affect limb movement, posture, balance, speed and flexibility.

Your doctor can use the Modified Ashworth Scale (MAS) to assess your muscle tone and advise a suitable treatment for you. MAS scores range from 0 to 4, where lower scores indicate normal muscle tone, and higher scores indicate spasticity.

## What is botulinum toxin A?

Botulinum toxin A belongs to a group of medicines called neuromuscular blockers which help to relax muscles by blocking the chemical signal between the nerves and muscles.

## Who can have botulinum toxin A?

Adults with focal spasticity of the lower limbs due to stroke can have botulinum toxin A (Botox) if they have a MAS score of 3 or more and are receiving physical therapy.

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

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## How much botulinum toxin A can I have?

Your doctor will give you a series of botulinum toxin A injections into affected muscles at the required dose.

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

## Why was botulinum toxin A recommended for subsidy?

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 reducing spasticity of the lower limbs for certain adults who have had a stroke justifies its cost. Other brands of botulinum toxin type A were not considered for subsidy.

## What does listing on the MAF mean for me?

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

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 Agency for Care Effectiveness - ACE

 Agency for Care Effectiveness (ACE)

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