

# Bladder Botox (for Bladder Control)

Patient Information · Injections that calm an overactive bladder

WARWIKI

Bladder Botox is a treatment for an **overactive bladder** — urgency, frequent trips, and leaking with urgency — that hasn't improved enough with lifestyle changes and medicines. Tiny amounts of botulinum toxin are injected into the bladder muscle through a small scope to relax it. The effect builds over 1–2 weeks and typically lasts about 6 months.

## How It Works

An overactive bladder muscle squeezes when it shouldn't. Botox **relaxes that muscle**, so it stops contracting uncontrollably — reducing urgency, frequency, and urge leakage. It does not work right away; you'll notice improvement over **1–2 weeks**.

## Is It Safe?

Yes, it's well established. The most important thing to know is that, by relaxing the bladder, Botox can sometimes make it **harder to fully empty** — a small number of people need to do **temporary self-catheterization** until it wears off. For that reason, you should be willing and able to learn self-catheterization if needed. Other effects include urinary infections and brief blood in the urine.

### LEARN THE TERMS

#### Overactive bladder

Urgency and frequent urination from the bladder squeezing too soon.

#### Botulinum toxin (Botox)

A medicine that relaxes muscle when injected.

#### Detrusor

The bladder muscle that is injected.

#### Cystoscope

The thin camera used to deliver the injections.

#### Self-catheterization

Passing a thin tube to empty the bladder, sometimes needed temporarily.

#### Post-void residual

Urine left after voiding — checked after the procedure.

**WILL IT HURT?** Numbing medicine is placed in the bladder first, so most people feel only mild pressure during the quick injections. It is usually an **office procedure under local anesthesia**, taking about 10–15 minutes, and you go home right after.

## How to Get Ready

- A **urine test** beforehand to rule out infection.
- You may be given an **antibiotic** around the procedure.
- Tell your team about **blood thinners**, and be prepared to learn self-catheterization just in case.

## What Happens

- 1 Numbing fluid is placed in the bladder.
- 2 A thin **cystoscope** is passed through the urethra.
- 3 Botox is injected into the bladder wall at several small spots.
- 4 The scope is removed — the whole thing takes about 10–15 minutes.

## After

- Mild burning or a little blood in the urine for a day or two is normal.
- Improvement builds over 1–2 weeks; the benefit lasts about 6 months and can be **repeated**.

### Call your team if you have:

- You **can't urinate** or feel you're not emptying
- Fever or chills (possible infection)
- Heavy bleeding or clots in the urine
- Burning that worsens after a few days

## Good to Know

- Your emptying is usually **checked** after the procedure.
- If repeat doses are planned, they're spaced by several months.

### THREE THINGS TO REMEMBER

1. Bladder Botox relaxes an overactive bladder muscle, easing urgency, frequency, and urge leakage; it works over 1–2 weeks and lasts ~6 months.
2. It's a quick office procedure with numbing; the main trade-off is that some people need temporary self-catheterization.
3. Call right away if you can't urinate or develop a fever after the procedure.