WATERFRONT
PRIVATE HOSPITAL

PATIENT INFORMATION · AFTERCARE

# Botulinum Toxin Aftercare

Quick-reference guide for aftercare following botulinum toxin treatment at Waterfront Private Hospital. This is a non-surgical cosmetic procedure with minimal downtime. Always follow the specific instructions provided by your practitioner.

Typical recovery: Minimal downtime, full results visible in 7–14 days · Reviewed 4 July 2026 · Version 1.0

## When to get help — your traffic light guide

RED

### Call 999 or go to A&E now if you have:

These can be life-threatening. Do not wait to call the hospital first.

- Difficulty breathing or swallowing

AMBER

### Contact us now — do not wait — if you have:

- Allergic reaction: rash, itching, or swelling beyond the injection site
- Severe facial weakness or paralysis beyond the expected effect area

**Office hours (Mon–Fri 9am–5pm):** 0131 376 3785

**Evenings and weekends during your early recovery:** Out-of-Hours Nurse Advice Line 07405322689 — our nurse can advise you, contact your surgeon, or direct you to NHS services.

**After your early recovery period:** call the hospital in office hours, or NHS 24 on 111.

Had your surgery at Spire Shawfair Park (overnight stay)? Contact Spire directly using the number on your discharge paperwork — not the Waterfront advice line.

GREEN

### Tell us at your next appointment:

Anything else that is niggling or worrying you — no concern is too small. Mention it at your next appointment, or call us during office hours.

## What to Expect After Treatment

Botulinum toxin is a quick, non-surgical procedure with minimal recovery time. Most people return to normal activities immediately. Here's what you might experience in the hours and days following treatment:

- **Redness and mild swelling** — At injection sites, usually improves within hours
- **Bruising** — Varies in severity; typically fades within 5–7 days
- **Mild discomfort** — Similar to a minor ache; paracetamol is suitable for relief
- **Tingling sensation** — Mild tingling around treated areas is normal
- **Mild headache** — Occasionally occurs; paracetamol is effective
- **Pain Relief:** Paracetamol is suitable for any discomfort. **Avoid ibuprofen and other NSAIDs for the first 24 hours** as they can increase bruising.

## Your Care Routine: First 24 Hours

The first 24 hours are crucial. Follow these time-specific instructions to allow the toxin to work effectively:

- **First couple of hours:** It's sensible to stay reasonably upright and avoid lying flat, mostly out of caution — the toxin settles into the muscle within minutes, so an accidental lie-down won't undo your treatment. Light activities (sitting, standing, walking) are fine.
- **First 4 Hours — What to avoid:** Don't touch, rub, massage, or press the treated areas. Avoid any manipulation of the injection sites. This prevents the toxin from spreading to nearby muscles.
- **First 12 Hours — Skin care restrictions:** Avoid makeup on treated areas. Don't apply moisturiser or other skincare products on treated areas. Allow the skin to breathe and settle.
- **Full 24 Hours — Key things to avoid:** Alcohol, hot baths, saunas and steam rooms — these increase facial flushing, swelling and bruising. Heavy exercise is best left for the first few hours, mainly to reduce the chance of bruising; light activity is fine.

## First 2 Weeks: What to Avoid

To ensure optimal results, avoid the following professional treatments during the first 2 weeks:

- **Professional facials** — May irritate treated skin
- **Chemical peels** — Can cause irritation and interfere with results
- **Facial massage or microdermabrasion** — May cause toxin migration and uneven results

- **Laser treatments** — Can interact with the treatment area

## Results Timeline

The effect of botulinum toxin develops gradually over the first two weeks. Here's what to expect:

- **Days 1–3** — Redness and mild swelling improve. You may notice very subtle changes in muscle movement as the toxin begins working.
- **Days 4–7** — Visible softening of expression lines becomes apparent. The effect becomes more noticeable as muscle relaxation increases.
- **Days 7–14** — Full results become visible with optimal smoothing and softening of lines. This is when you'll see the complete final effect.
- **3-4 Months** — Results gradually fade as your body metabolises the toxin. Expression lines gradually return to their pre-treatment appearance. Many patients schedule follow-up treatments around this time.

## General Aftercare Tips

- **Sun Protection** — Wear SPF 30+ sunscreen daily, even on cloudy days. UV exposure can accelerate the fading of results.
- **Hydration** — Drink plenty of water throughout the day to support healing and skin health.
- **Gentle Skincare** — Use mild, fragrance-free products. Avoid any aggressive treatments or exfoliants for the first 2 weeks.
- **Sleep Position** — If it's comfortable, try not to press the treated area into the pillow on the first night. There's no strong evidence that sleep position changes your result — just avoid deliberately rubbing the area.
- **Avoid Blood Thinners** — Avoid aspirin, ibuprofen, and alcohol for 24 hours to minimise bruising and swelling.

## Remember

**Remember:** Botulinum toxin results are temporary and will gradually fade as your body metabolises the product. Most patients choose to schedule maintenance treatments every 3–4 months to maintain their desired results. We're here to help you achieve and maintain your aesthetic goals.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**How long does the effect last?**

Results typically last 3–4 months, although this varies based on individual metabolism and muscle mass. Some people notice the effect wearing off slightly earlier or later.

**When can I have another treatment?**

Wait at least 12 weeks (3 months) between treatments. Treatments spaced too closely together may cause antibody formation, reducing effectiveness over time.

**Is bruising normal?**

Yes, bruising is common and varies from person to person. It typically fades within 5–7 days. Avoid blood-thinning medications, and cold compresses can help, but never rub or massage the area.

**Can I combine botulinum toxin with other treatments?**

Yes, you can combine it with dermal fillers on the same day. However, wait at least 2 weeks before having other facial procedures like chemical peels, microdermabrasion, or laser treatments.

**What if I'm not happy with the results?**

Contact us within 2 weeks of treatment if you have concerns about symmetry or results. Touch-ups can be performed. Remember that the effect is temporary and will fade naturally in 3–4 months.

**Can I exercise after botulinum toxin treatment?**

You can be active as normal, but it's worth avoiding heavy exercise for the first few hours, mainly to reduce the chance of bruising — not because it affects the result. Light activity and walking are fine straight away.