This leaflet is for patients considering botulinum toxin injections for excessive tear production.

**What is the effect of botulinum toxin?**
The effect of botulinum toxin is to reduce the excessive production of tears in patients whose eyes water due to abnormal nerve connections. This usually occurs when chewing or eating, and the condition is commonly known as "watery eyes".

**Will botulinum toxin affect my general health?**
The treatment is safe and there is no risk of developing botulism or food poisoning. We have never had a patient who has experienced any general health problem due to botulinum, but all medication carries a small potential risk of a serious allergic reaction (anaphylaxis). There is no known risk when the treatment is given to women who are pregnant or breastfeeding, but some patients prefer to postpone treatment until they have given birth or weaned their child.

**Who will I see when I attend the clinic?**
You will be seen by a nurse or healthcare assistant and then one of the doctors working with the consultant ophthalmologist. If the treatment is suitable for you, you will be asked to read and sign a consent form, and you will usually receive the treatment on the same day in the clinic. You should expect to be in the clinic for the whole morning or afternoon.

**What is the treatment procedure?**
You will be given local anaesthetic drops to numb the eye. These drops are very effective in taking away the surface
sensation of the eye but you might still experience some discomfort when the injection is given. A small injection is given into the lacrimal (tear) gland, either through the upper lid skin or just underneath the lid by turning the lid over.

What happens after the injection?
You will be able to go home after the injection. You may feel an ache in the injected area and you can take a painkiller if necessary.

When should I expect to see an effect from the treatment?
The effect is usually noticed about two days after the injection is given.

How long does the effect last?
This can vary, but it usually lasts between three and five months.

What are the possible side effects?
With any injection in or around the eye it is possible to suffer a serious side effect affecting the eye or vision but this is extremely rare.

Nearly all side effects are temporary and recover with time. Potential side effects are as follows:

- Dry eye: this may need to be treated with artificial tear drops before the effect wears off
- Drooping of the eyelid on the injected side
- Temporary double vision – you should not drive while you have double vision. It is very important that you discuss this with the doctor before treatment if this is of particular concern to you (see DVLA website: double vision and driving)
- Slight bruising of the eyelid

When do I return to the clinic?
You will usually have an appointment made to return to the clinic after three or four months.

Other important information
The majority of medicines used in the UK hold a ‘product licence’ or ‘marketing authorisation’ which is granted by a government organisation. The licence covers specific conditions in which the medicine can be used to treat people. Although botulinum toxin has been used for treating eye conditions at Moorfields since 1982 and has been used for treating watery eyes since 1998, this particular condition is not covered in the product licence. However, it has been judged by the prescribing doctor that botulinum toxin should be used in this way to satisfy an individual patient need and it is in the best interests of the patient. Records are kept of all injections and patient details.
If you have any reason to believe that you may be a carrier of hepatitis or the HIV virus, please make sure that you tell the nurse or doctor who sees you in the clinic. The information is confidential but it is essential that we are informed.

If you are unclear about any aspect of this treatment or have any questions, please ask the doctor to explain further.

Moorfields’ PALS team provides confidential advice and support to help you with any concerns you may have about the care we provide, guiding you through the different services available at Moorfields. The PALS team can also advise you on how to make a complaint.

Your right to treatment within 18 weeks
Under the NHS constitution, all patients have the right to begin consultant-led treatment within 18 weeks of being referred by their GP. Moorfields is committed to fulfilling this right, but if you feel that we have failed to do so, please contact our patient advice and liaison service (PALS) who will be able to advise you further (see above). For more information about your rights under the NHS constitution, visit www.nhs.uk/choiceinthenhs

Moorfields Direct telephone helpline
Phone: 020 7566 2345
Monday–Friday, 9am–9pm
Information and advice on eye conditions and treatments from experienced ophthalmic-trained nurses.

Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)
Phone: 020 7566 2324 or 020 7566 2325
Email: pals@moorfields.nhs.uk