

Editorial

The Story of Botulinum Toxin is Amazing

Dominique Batifol*

Department of Maxillofacial Surgery, Montpellier University Hospital, France

EDITORIAL

A century ago, it was known only as a violent poison and 40 years ago, we discovered it, as a drug, but with only one action: muscular decontraction. And now, we are closed to 800 different indications, including dystonia, spasticity, migraine headache, neuralgia, keloid scars, articular pain, bruxism, facial palsy and even tinnitus....

There is new indications every year. During the last decade, numerous studies from around the world demonstrated the efficiency of the treatment with Botulinum Toxin on pain and inflammation.

In our department, we initiated many protocols on new indications. We begun in 2004 a study on the parotid gland and duct injuries and the efficacy of Botulinum Toxin in these cases, draining the gland or decreasing secretion, according to the indications.

In 2011, 2 protocols were implemented on trigeminal neuralgia and occipital neuralgia. The results were surprising, that is to say very good for trigeminal neuralgia and as good as the other treatment for occipital neuralgia, but only the toxin showed a total lack of adverse effects from its use.

An other very interesting indication: hypertrophic and keloid scars pain and inflammation. The toxin is as effective as

*Corresponding author

Dominique Batifol, Department of Maxillofacial Surgery, Montpellier University Hospital, France, Tel: 336-86862618; Email: dominique.batifol@dbmail.com

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corticosteroids, for longer, and with no side effects. So, now, in our department, we do not re-operate on a scar with pain and inflammation reaction without Botulinum Toxin. After 7 years, we have now some perspective and some of our patients finished their treatment for a long time and do not have any reoccurrences.

We used the toxin also to improves carrying of facial wounds.

In 2007, we begun the injections in the temporomandibular joint for severe and chronic pain. Botulinum Toxins is a powerful analgesic and all patients experienced, to some extent, a reduction in pain by one month, and rather more than less.

More recently, we discovered a positive side effect of the treatment of bruxism by Botulinum Toxin: it stops or decreases tinnitus... ! Not all tinnitus, but most of them, and it is already very interesting.

So, the toxin is a wonderful treatment. Bad surprises are scarce ; in the worst of cases, a total absence of effect, if the usual precautions are observed (3months delay between two injections, do not inject pregnant women, patients with myopathy,...).

Studying new treatments with Botulinum Toxin is very exciting, and I am lucky, because it is my daily job... !