Diaphoresis, Treatment with Botox

The medical name for excessive sweating under the arms is primary axillary hyperhidrosis. This condition can interfere with regular social interaction. It can have emotional and professional consequences for some people. Botulinum Toxin Type A (Botox) is an approved treatment for severe underarm sweating. This is used only when the problem can not be managed by prescription antiperspirants. Botox is approved for several other purposes.

Botox was first approved in December 1989 to treat two eye muscle disorders. It is also approved to treat cervical dystonia. This is a nerve movement disorder which causes severe neck and shoulder muscle contractions. In 2002, it was approved to temporarily improve the appearance of moderate to severe frown lines between the eyebrows. This means it can be used to get rid of wrinkles. Botox has also been shown to help with excessive sweating of the palms.

BEFORE THE PROCEDURE

Before being treated for excessive sweating, patients should be checked for other possible causes of the problem. This avoids treating a symptom which could be caused by some other serious disease that needs a different treatment.

PROCEDURE

Botox is a protein produced by the germ (*bacterium*) Clostridium botulinum. Small doses are injected under the arms to control sweating. These injections stop the release of acetylcholine. Acetylcholine is a chemical messenger which makes you sweat. These injections temporarily block the nerves in the underarm from producing this messenger. The reduction in sweating may last for an average of 7 months and up to 16 months after one injection.

RISK AND COMPLICATIONS OF THE PROCEDURE

The most common bad reactions are:

- Injection site pain and bleeding.
- Sweating in other parts of the body.
- Flu-like symptoms.
- Headache.
- Fever.
- Itching.
- Anxiety.

Rarely, it can cause a generalized paralysis.

The safety and effectiveness of Botox for excessive sweating in other body areas is not known.

Botox is a prescription drug. It must be used carefully under medical supervision. It should be used only for approved indications.

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