

Best HealthSM

Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center

Botox in Brief

- Botox is used to prevent both migraine and chronic daily headaches. Treatment is successful in preventing chronic daily headaches in about 75 percent of cases and preventing migraines in 60 percent of cases.
- At about \$700 per treatment, the injections are less costly and have fewer side effects than many other medications used for headache prevention.
- Injections are needed every three to five months — the time it takes for the paralysis to wear off.
- Depending on where the pain occurs, injections are made in the muscles around the eyes, forehead and sometimes in the neck and shoulders.

Botox™ delivers Headache Relief

When Pam Arnold was warned by an emergency room physician that she might develop migraine headaches after her head-on car collision, she never imagined that she would spend the next two years in almost constant pain.

"It was a daily thing. My head ached and ached and ached," says Arnold, of Ferrum, Va. "Then, I also began having migraines every two to three



Regular Botox™ injections banished Pam Arnold's migraines.

days, with violent pain and vomiting." Arnold tried a variety of pain medications, but none of them helped. "Sometimes it felt like someone was driving an enormous nail in my face,"

mended a new preventive treatment for headaches — injections of botulinum toxin.

A purified version of the toxin that causes botulism, Botox™ is used to treat a variety of conditions — from writer's cramp to voice disorders to facial wrinkles. It works by temporarily paralyzing muscles.

"This is now one of the main preventive therapies for headache," says Troost, who has treated more than 250 patients with Botox. "When it is effective, the need for daily medications or acute medicines for severe attacks is significantly reduced or eliminated."

Arnold had significant improvement after one treatment — after three treatments her headaches disappeared.

"I'm thrilled," says Arnold. "If I have to have the injections for the rest of my life, that suits me fine."

Arnold tried a variety of pain medications, but none of them helped.





driving an enormous nail in my face," says Arnold. "I couldn't even cry any more. There were no tears left."

Two years after her accident, Arnold sought treatment from Todd Troost, M.D., chairman and professor of neurology at WFUBMC. He recom-

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