



American Academy of  
Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

## Considerations for Botulinum Toxin Injections and COVID-19 Vaccination

The American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation is committed to sharing available, current information that is most pertinent to PM&R, so clinicians can make informed decisions about patient care.

There is no specific guidance or direct evidence on interactions between botulinum toxins and COVID-19 vaccines. Therefore, the Academy's Evidence, Quality and Performance Committee developed this statement to provide considerations for clinicians who use botulinum toxins in practice, based on current guidance for other interventional procedures.

Clinicians should consider the following:

- Discussion with patients on the unknowns of interactions between botulinum toxins and the COVID-19 vaccines, and encouragement for the timing of vaccination based on risk status and comorbidities;
- Recognize some similarities of side effects between botulinum toxins and COVID-19 vaccine, and education on when to contact the physician office following botulinum toxin injection;
- A 2-week pre- and post- injection period between COVID-19 vaccine and Botulinum Toxin injections to minimize risk of increased immune response (e.g. developing antibodies) to Botulinum Toxin

As always, consideration of comorbid history in making treatment recommendations for use of botulinum toxins in physiatry care, and counseling patients on the importance of continuing treatment to maintain symptom improvement.

**DISCLAIMER:** This AAPM&R Statement is based on the best available evidence and does not constitute formal treatment recommendations. Due to the changing body of evidence, this document is not intended to be a “standard of care”. At the release of this statement, the only vaccinations with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance and Emergency Use approval from the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) are those from: Moderna, Pfizer and Johnson & Johnson. The Academy will update this Statement as evidence becomes available.

### References:

1. Simpson M, Gracies JM, Graham HK, et al.; for the Therapeutics and Technology Assessment Subcommittee of the American Academy of Neurology. Assessment: botulinum neurotoxin for the treatment of spasticity (an evidence-based review): report of the Therapeutics and Technology Assessment Subcommittee of the American Academy of Neurology. *Neurology* 2008;70:1691–1698.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines Currently Authorized in the United States; accessed on March 11, 2021 via <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/info-by-product/clinical-considerations.html>