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Botox boost for spastics

Not many know the beauty drug is also used to treat people with this disorder

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"SHE WAS a vegetable," said Dr J.D. Mukherji of 23-year-old Ameera Rasheed Sulaiman.

A head-on collision with a truck in Oman caused a head injury that put her in a semi-coma, unable to speak or control her muscles. The crash also fractured her legs and broke several ribs.

But a treatment, better known for erasing wrinkles came to her rescue. Botulinum toxin — popularly known as Botox — helped her get back on her feet after being brought to India for



ANJALI SINHA/HT

Ameera Sulaiman at her physiotherapy session.

treatment two years ago.

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Senior consultant, Max Healthcare, Saket

Healthcare in Saket.

"She was conscious, but disoriented. Both her hands were flexed and legs cross-legged," he said.

Sulaiman had become spastic, with unwanted increase in muscle tone resulting in chronically flexed elbows, wrists, clenched fists, internally rotated shoulders and legs.

"I didn't even know if she recognised me," said Rasheed Sulaiman, her hus-

band, with the help of an in-house translator.

Sulaiman was administered her first dose of the neuro-toxin in May 2007 in her lower limbs. After which, she underwent aggressive physiotherapy, followed by a second dose on June 6 last year.

After her third dose of the toxin, she is up and standing on her feet. Doctors said she needs annual follow-ups, as botulinum toxin is not a permanent cure.

"Most people often think that botulinum toxin is purely used for beauty regimens, which is completely untrue. At AIIMS we have been giving Botulinum toxin since 1990. It is a boon for people with spasticity after strokes, spinal cord injury and cerebral palsy," said Dr Madhuri Behari professor and head in the department of neurology.

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