CLAIMS:

1. A method for purifying a botulinum toxin from a solution comprising the toxin, comprising:

(a) filtering the solution comprising the toxin;

(b) contacting a first chromatography column with the filtered solution comprising the toxin from (a), wherein the first chromatography column is an ion exchange chromatography column;

(c) collecting a toxin-containing fraction, wherein the toxin-containing fraction flows through the first chromatography column without adsorbing to the stationary phase;

(d) contacting a second chromatography column with the toxin-containing fraction, wherein the second chromatography column is an ion exchange chromatography column;

(e) eluting the botulinum toxin from the second chromatography column to produce a first toxin-containing eluant;

(f) filtering the first toxin-containing eluant to produce a toxin-containing retentate;

(g) contacting a third chromatography column with the toxin-containing retentate from the filtering (f), wherein the third chromatography column is an ion exchange column;

(h) eluting the botulinum toxin from the third chromatography column to produce a second toxin-containing eluant;

(i) contacting a fourth chromatography column with the second toxin-containing eluant, wherein said fourth chromatography column is a size exclusion chromatography column;

(j) eluting the botulinum toxin from the fourth chromatography column, thereby producing a purified botulinum toxin,

wherein the method does not comprise precipitating, centrifuging or lyophilizing the botulinum toxin.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the botulinum toxin comprises botulinum neurotoxin serotype A.

3. The method of claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the purified botulinum toxin obtained is free, essentially free, or substantially free of botulinum toxin complexes.

4. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the purified botulinum toxin obtained is free, essentially free, or substantially free of animal products.

5. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the purified botulinum toxin is free, essentially free, or substantially free of human albumin.

6. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the first chromatography column comprises an anion exchange chromatography column.

7. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the first chromatography column comprises Q Sepharose.

8. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the second chromatography column comprises a cation exchange chromatography column.

9. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the second chromatography column comprises SP Sepharose.

10. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the first chromatography column comprises an anion exchange chromatography column and the second chromatography column comprises a cation exchange chromatography column.

11. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the first chromatography column comprises Q Sepharose and the second chromatography column comprises SP Sepharose.

12. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the third chromatography column comprises an anion exchange chromatography column.

13. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the third chromatography column comprises Q Sepharose.

14. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the fourth chromatography column comprises a gel filtration column.

15. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the fourth chromatography column comprises Superdex 200.

16. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the third chromatography column comprises an anion exchange chromatography column and the fourth chromatography column comprises a gel filtration chromatography column.

17. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the third chromatography column comprises Q Sepharose and the fourth chromatography column comprises Superdex 200.

18. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the second toxin-containing eluant is directly injected onto the fourth chromatography column.

19. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the third chromatography column and the fourth chromatography column are interconnected.

20. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the first chromatography column is an anion exchange chromatography column, the second chromatography column is a cation exchange chromatography column, the third chromatography column is a second anion exchange chromatography column, and the fourth chromatography column is a gel filtration chromatography column.

21. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the first chromatography column comprises Q Sepharose, the second chromatography column comprises SP Sepharose, the third chromatography column comprises Q Sepharose, and the fourth chromatography column comprises Superdex 200.

22. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the first, second, third, and fourth chromatography columns are single-use chromatography systems.

23. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the filtering (f) dissociates botulinum toxin protein molecules from non-toxin proteins to produce free toxin molecules.

24. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the filtering (f) comprises a buffer exchange.

25. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the solution comprising botulinum toxin is an animal product free, essentially animal product free, or substantially animal product free fermentation medium.

26. The method of any preceding claim, further comprising contacting the botulinum toxin with a buffer solution, wherein said buffer solution has been filtered to reduce bioburden.

27. A method for purifying a botulinum toxin from a solution comprising the toxin, comprising:

(a) filtering the solution comprising the toxin;

(b) contacting a first chromatography column with the filtered solution comprising the toxin from (a) at a pH of 5.5 to 7, wherein the first chromatography column is an ion exchange chromatography column;

(c) collecting a toxin-containing fraction, wherein the toxin-containing fraction flows through the first chromatography column without adsorbing to the stationary phase;

(d) contacting a second chromatography column with the toxin-containing fraction from (c) at a pH of 4 to 5, wherein the second chromatography column is an ion exchange chromatography column;

(e) eluting the botulinum toxin from the second chromatography column to produce a first toxin-containing eluant;

(f) filtering the first toxin-containing eluant to produce a toxin-containing retentate;

(g) contacting a third chromatography column with the toxin-containing retentate from the filtering (f) at a pH of 7.5 to 8.5, wherein the third chromatography column is an ion exchange column;

(h) eluting the botulinum toxin from the third chromatography column to produce a second toxin-containing eluant;

(i) contacting a fourth chromatography column with the second toxin-containing eluant at a pH of 6 to 7, wherein said fourth chromatography column is a size exclusion chromatography column;

(j) eluting the botulinum toxin from the fourth chromatography column, thereby producing a purified botulinum toxin,

wherein the method does not comprise precipitating, centrifuging or lyophilizing the botulinum toxin.

28. The method of claim 1 or claim 27, wherein the first chromatography column is an anion exchange chromatography column comprising an agarose bead-based medium; the second chromatography column is a cation exchange chromatography column comprising an agarose bead-based medium; the third chromatography column is an anion exchange chromatography column comprising an agarose bead-based medium; and the fourth chromatography column is a gel filtration column comprising an agarose bead-based medium.