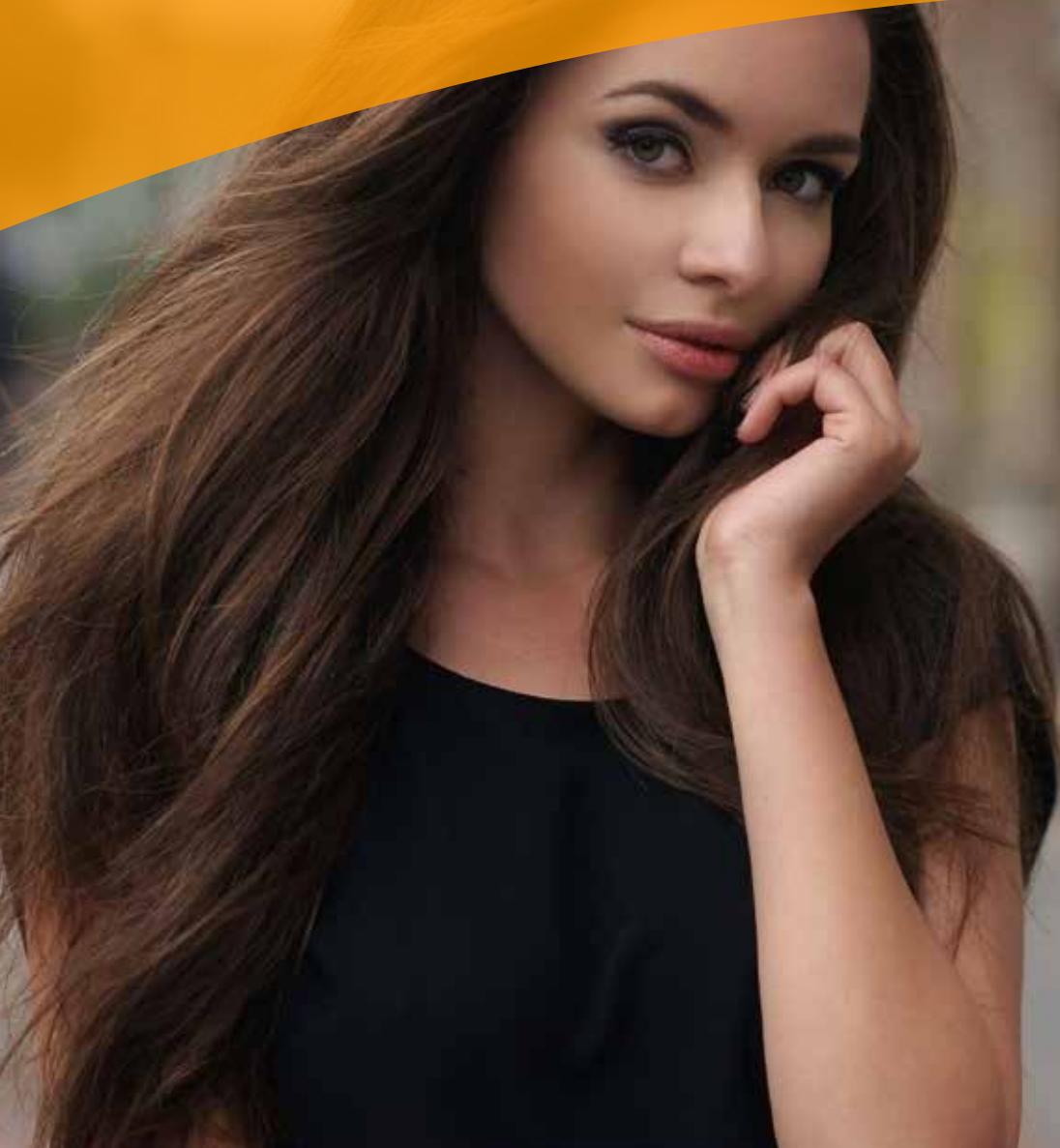


BOTULINUM TOXIN INJECTION FOR FACIAL WRINKLES





We can't turn back the clock on aging. But millions of people get injections of botulinum toxin (sold under the brand name Botox and others), which can temporarily reduce some kinds of facial wrinkles. And it's used for a variety of medical purposes as well. Here's what you should know if you're considering the procedure.

WHAT IS BOTULINUM TOXIN, AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

Botulinum toxin is a potent paralyzing agent produced by *Clostridium botulinum* bacteria. Botulinum toxin can cause the life-threatening illness botulism, which you can get from eating contaminated food. But injected in tiny amounts

and in a purified form, botulinum toxin has been widely used over the last few decades to treat muscle spasms and other medical problems.

It was discovered that the toxin could also reduce wrinkling by relaxing the small muscles involved in repetitive facial expressions, leading to its approval as a drug for smoothing eyebrow furrows. The effects last about four months.

AREAS FOR BOTOX TREATMENT

Botox treatment is administered through a series of precise and formulated injection points. The product is introduced to the face via ultra-fine microneedles. They are specially-designed to



reduce the pain of the injection and to make your treatment as comfortable and stress-free as possible. We do, however, provide numbing cream for patients, if requested.

The injections themselves usually take a matter of minutes, but we may wish to monitor you for a brief period after your treatment, or consult you before treatment if it is your first time. This is to ensure that you get the right treatment for you, and that your safety is upheld at all times. For cosmetic treatment, botulinum toxin is used in small doses to temporarily relax facial muscles and prevent overuse. This in time will smooth facial lines and wrinkles and give a rejuvenated result. Some of the most popular areas to treat with Botox include:

Glabella

The glabella (“Eleven’s”) refers to the small area of the forehead between the eyebrows. As we often use this muscle to create expressions, it can mean some of our most prominent wrinkles and grooves are formed in this area. Relaxing the muscle and the tension in this area can dramatically reduce lines and soften your facial features.

Forehead

Usually an area treated in combination with the glabella and the crow’s feet, the forehead is a problem area for many. As we age, the facial muscles and the fat pads in our face shift and migrate down the face, making us look older, tired and quite sad looking. A small amount of Botox to this area can help lift the brow line and reduce the weight pulling the features down.

Crow’s Feet

Formed at the corners of our eyes, crow’s feet are often a bugbear of our patients’. While in some cases we can remove these lines completely, most - at the very least - will notice a softer and younger appearance around the eyes after Botox.



ARE THERE ANY POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF COSMETIC BOTULINUM TOXIN?

Botulinum toxin is considered less risky than plastic surgery. But you can get temporary muscle weakness or paralysis adjacent to the injection site, which can result in a droopy eyelid or brow, double vision, or asymmetry in features. Temporary loss in facial expression is common. Side effects are more likely with larger doses and with less experienced practitioners. As with any injection, botulinum toxin can cause redness, bruising, mild swelling, and pain. Allergic reactions - characterized by itching, rashes, wheezing, and asthma-like symptoms - are possible.

SHOULD SOME PEOPLE AVOID BOTULINUM TOXIN?

Women who are pregnant or breastfeeding should not get botulinum toxin. If you have a neurological disorder, such as multiple sclerosis or myasthenia gravis, talk to your doctor first, since you may be at increased risk of serious side effects. People with psychiatric disorders related to body image may not be good candidates for cosmetic procedures, including Botox. The same goes for people who are allergic to albumin, which is used in the manufacture of Botox, as should anyone who has an infection at the injection site. It should also be used with caution in people with certain types of glaucoma or respiratory diseases, or who take medications that affect nerve transmission to muscles.

If you're thinking of using botulinum toxin, tell your physician if you are taking medication, since certain medications, including calcium channel blockers, may in theory increase botulinum toxin's effects.

Anti-clotting medication such as aspirin and warfarin (Coumadin) can increase bleeding at the injection site. Also tell your physician if you have a history of bleeding disorders, a recent heart attack, or cardiac arrhythmias, or if you are planning to have surgery soon. (All of these may negatively interact with botulinum toxin and increase the risk of adverse effects.)

IS BOTOX TREATMENT PERMAMENT?

No. Results will vary, but results typically last from four to six months. At that point, when wrinkles begin to reappear, another Botox session will be needed. Lines and wrinkles often appear less severe over time because the muscles are being trained to relax and stop contracting.

Botox is not going to eliminate wrinkles altogether. It is only to be used as a temporary solution for managing the problem.

IS THE TREATMENT PAINFUL?

An anti-wrinkle injectable is administered with a very fine needle, and takes only a few seconds. It's the tiny prick of the needle for a moment, and most patients tolerate it very well. Several injections are given into the area you're concerned about, for example the frown lines between the brows. If you are highly sensitive, and topical anaesthetic gel can be applied first.





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