

BOTOX

IS IT A MIRACLE IN A BOTTLE?

BY MELODY LESSER

You hate the crow's feet around your eyes. The furrows on your brow give you a permanently angry expression. You want to look ten to fifteen years younger, but refuse to go "under the knife." You hate pain, fear anesthesia and the thought of a recuperation period gives you the willies. Do you have to resign yourself to an etched reflection in your bathroom mirror? Not necessarily. If you're willing to put up with the discomfort of a few stabs of a fine gauge needle and risk some side effects, which, according to experts, are minimal if the procedure is performed correctly by a qualified physician, you might be a candidate for Botox® injections. Recovery time? Ha. You can do this on your lunch hour and be back at work with no one being the wiser. And, pay attention, this is important...this past April, the Food and Drug Administration cleared Botox for cosmetic use on the glabellar region of the face. (In lay terms, that's the area between the eyebrows where vertical frown lines appear, making you look sad or angry.) Newspapers and magazines proclaim its name in huge headlines. A photo essay of Hollywood's elite begs the question, "Does she or doesn't she?" And it seems people are slipping into the offices of cosmetic surgeons and dermatologists everywhere for a quick pick-me-up.

Botox has been used for years as a treatment for certain muscular disorders. In the late 1980s, it was approved by the FDA to treat blepharospasm (eye muscle spasms) and strabismus (crossed eyes). In 2000, Botox received FDA approval for treatment of cervical dystonia, a disorder that affects the neck and shoulder muscles. The fact that Botox also helped erase facial wrinkles was a happy discovery. According to statistics compiled by the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, injections of Botox were the most popular cosmetic procedures performed last year, numbering more than 1.6 million.

HEY, ISN'T THAT STUFF POISON?

Botox, a therapeutic muscle-relaxing agent, is derived from Botulinum Toxin Type A. There are seven types of Botulinum Toxin and they are responsible for causing botulism, a deadly disease that causes respiratory paralysis. However, when purified and used in small doses, it has unquestionable medicinal qualities.

"Botox is a protein fiber, not a poison," says Paddy Deighan, CEO of DermAmerica, a New Jersey-based corporate practice management company and dermatology network. It is a drug that when purified, sterilized and injected, effectively blocks the release of a chemical that signals the muscle to contract. In the simplest terms, Botox paralyzes or weakens

the injected muscle, resulting in a smoothing of facial wrinkles. It is most successful when used on the upper third of the face, including the forehead, glabellar region and crow's feet around the eyes. The recent FDA clearance is for the use of Botox on glabellar lines only. How is it that doctors use Botox on other parts of the face? Well, whereas the FDA regulates drugs, medical devices and equipment, it does not regulate medical procedures, leaving doctors free to use Botox "off label." Allergan, a California-based pharmaceutical company, manufactures Botox. (Allergan refers to its newly approved drug as Botox Cosmetic.)

But, doesn't FDA clearance of Botox indicate to the consumer that it's safe to use? "I've been using Botox for the last four years or so," says David A. Bottger, M.D., of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery in Bryn Mawr. "The FDA approval has created a media hype, but it's really a formality." Birgit Toome, M.D., FAAD, a dermatologist with practices in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Texas, has seen a modest spike from patients who request Botox. "Maybe with the FDA clearance, people who were hesitant may have a little more confidence to get the procedure done."

Christine Cassiano, manager for Allergan's public relations, says, "We're excited about the ability to educate consumers to make sure they get the best possible outcome. The key is that Botox should be administered by dermatologists, plastic surgeons or other aesthetically oriented physicians. They are the people who truly have an understanding of facial anatomy."

BOTOX AND THE ANATOMY OF A WRINKLE

"Wrinkles happen either as part of the natural aging process on elastin or collagen of the skin and from the sun. The other way you get wrinkles is from contraction and expansion of facial muscles, causing dynamic lines," says Deighan. Administering Botox is simple. After an initial consultation, the physician performs a series of injections directly into the muscle, "preventing it from forming those dynamic lines that appear as a wrinkle." Patients are often instructed not to rub the treated area and to remain vertical for several hours following the injections. Exercising the treated muscles periodically in the hours following the procedure is also encouraged.

Botox users may be asked not to take aspirin prior to their injections because it can cause bleeding at the injection sites, and take note, results are not immediate. Don't expect to face the world with a smooth brow in the moments following a round of Botox injections. "Most patients will notice results in three to five days," says Timothy M. Greco,

PHOTO BY MICHAEL SPAIN-SMITH



IN THE SIMPLEST TERMS,
BOTOX PARALYZES OR WEAKENS
THE INJECTED MUSCLE,
RESULTING IN A SMOOTHING
OF FACIAL WRINKLES.

You Smile, Laugh and Frown.

Over time, those expressions leave their mark upon your face.
Now you can do something about it...



Trust your face
to a specialist

DR. TIMOTHY GRECO'S PRACTICE IS DEDICATED SOLELY
TO EXCELLENCE IN COSMETIC SURGERY OF THE FACE.



TIMOTHY M. GRECO, M.D. F.A.C.S.
FACIAL PLASTIC & RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY
FELLOWSHIP TRAINED / BOARD CERTIFIED
AMERICAN BOARD OF FACIAL PLASTIC AND RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY
2 BALA PLAZA, SUITE PL-15
BALA CYNWYD, PA 19004 • 610-664-8830
VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.DRGRECOFACE.COM

BOTOX® Cosmetic,

the highly effective procedure that can dramatically reduce your toughest wrinkle in one easy treatment.

Dr. Timothy Greco has published in the medical literature on the effective use of BOTOX® and has used it successfully in his practice for years.

Facelifts without surgery

Using non-invasive electrical stimulation, Dr. Sager has been able to achieve the effect of facial surgery to tighten sagging facial muscles, soften embedded wrinkles and remove bags from under the eyes.

Needles are never used.

Dr. Sager has been able to accomplish marvelous results within 10 to 12 treatments.

Please call for a brochure.



Marshall H. Sager, D.O.

Board Certified Physician Acupuncturist

191 Presidential Boulevard, Bala Cynwyd. 610-668-2400.
1818 Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia.

Medical Acupuncture is effective for Asthma, Allergies, Back Pain, Colitis, Fatigue, Flu, Impotence, Infertility, Insomnia, Menopause, Migraines, Neck Pains, PMS, Shingles, Smoking, Stress, Joint Pains, Pre and Post Surgery, Tendinitis, Tennis Elbow.

M.D., F.A.C.S., of Eastern Cosmetic Surgery Institute in Bala Cynwyd. "However, for some patients, the final effect may take up to two weeks." It is at that time that your physician will want to see you for a follow-up visit. Your progress will be assessed and the doctor can fine-tune the results by administering additional Botox if he or she feels it is warranted. Generally, men need more Botox than women to achieve desired results.

I WANT MY BOTOX

Judy L. is a beautiful woman with large, wide-set eyes and heavily arched eyebrows. At 42, she was bothered by the wrinkles on her forehead. "Since I was 19, my mother would put tape on my forehead to remind me not to lift my brows because it created creases. But it's a habit I have, and part of my facial expression. The lines got deeper and I could no longer cover them with makeup because it caked in the furrows, making them look worse. I had Botox injections and I love the result. My doctor had the needles ready when I walked in. He cleaned off the area, and bing, bang, boom, I was in and out in seven minutes. I was worried about the pain, but all I felt was a little stinging. The needle is so fine, you can't really feel it. I came out of the office with a little redness at the injection sites, but that went away quickly. I had three major lines in my forehead. My doctor did maybe four or five injections under each line. I actually saw results in less than 24 hours. I went to work the next day and people could tell. Within three days, the Botox had taken full effect and my lines were gone. My doctor wants to see me again after two weeks for a booster if I need it. He'd rather do too little than too much. I love it. My skin is tighter. It was the best thing. If I can afford it, I will do it forever."

Botox is used by people ranging from their late twenties to their seventies. "Younger patients may benefit from its ability to eradicate unpleasant facial expressions that are associated with the pressures of life," says Greco. "Older patients usually use it for wrinkles."

MISCONCEPTIONS, FALLACIES AND THE DOWNSIDE

According to the experts we've cited, Botox, when administered properly by a trained physician, has few side effects. Allergic reactions are rare. There is a small percentage of the population for whom Botox doesn't work or who develop antibodies to it. (Other injectables, including Myobloc, a drug that works similarly, can be used instead.)

THE ART OF PLASTIC SURGERY

The Natural Result
You Are Looking For

Specializing in Cosmetic Surgery

- **BREAST**
Enlargement, Reduction, Lifts
- **FACE**
Face and Neck Lift, Nose, Eyes, Botox,
Laser Wrinkle Reduction, Microdermabrasion
- **BODY**
Tummy Tucks, Liposuction, Laser Hair Removal

Call for a complimentary consultation and preview the possibilities with our computer imager.



DAVID A. BOTTGER, M.D.

*Certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery
Certified by the American Board of Surgery
Member of the American Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons*

Bryn Mawr • 610-520-1929 Drexel Hill • 610-259-0444

www.drbottdger.com



The perfect summer deserves a perfect smile

BRITE SMILE

in just one visit, get a smile twice as brite
call to find out how

Harold B. Yaffe, D.D.S. Paul J. Berson, D.D.S.

DENTAL OFFICES

1601 WALNUT STREET • PHILADELPHIA • SUITE 704
2 1 5 . 5 6 7 . 0 8 0 0



"Botox doesn't migrate," says Deighan. "It does not cause paralysis in other parts of the body." There is, however, the possibility of ptosis, or drooping of the eyelid or eyebrow. But according to everyone with whom we spoke, this is due to misapplication. Says Greco, "Botox injections are successfully performed by multiple specialists, including facial and ocular plastic surgeons, general practice plastic surgeons and dermatologists. It is important to consider the experience of your doctor with this procedure, in addition to his or her knowledge of the anatomy of the muscles of the face."

Botox is readily used in combination with other procedures. "For the older patient, Botox alone is not going to do the trick," says Toome. I use it with other things, like laser [resurfacing] and micro- and macrodermabrasion. It makes those procedures last longer. Botox relaxes muscles as the person heals and prevents them from re-wrinkling treated areas. When used on a younger patient, it can totally restore their look." And while Botox is recommended for use on the upper third of the face, "It can be injected around the mouth, but the risks go up and include drooling and the inability to pronounce the letters O and P. Drooling for a few months would not be acceptable to me or anyone else."

The good news about possible side effects from incorrectly applied Botox injections is what many patients consider to be the bad news about the drug itself. Results are temporary, lasting anywhere from three to six months. "But," says Greco, "if a patient continues to use Botox over an extended period of time, I find that those patients have a longer lasting effect, sometimes up to eight months." Botox is not recommended during pregnancy or lactation or for those with certain neurological disorders. Other drawbacks are that Botox isn't cheap, averaging about \$400 per facial area. In the vial, it has a fairly short shelf life, and it has to be diluted. Inexperienced—or worse, unscrupulous—physicians who try to make their supply of Botox last longer by diluting it too much may have patients who experience migration of the substance into a muscle near the one being treated. "If one were to heavily dilute Botox, they'd have to inject more of it to achieve the desired results," says Toome. "The more volume you inject into a small area, the more likely you are to have migration."

Botox, when administered properly, can result in a smoother, more youthful facial expression. However, some patients fall prey to wanting too much of it. Botox junkies stare at us from television and movie screens. Their unblinking eyes gaze vacantly beneath

eyebrows that, while prettily arched, don't move. We won't name names. You'll have to look for the telltale signs yourselves. "It becomes somewhat addictive," says Bottger. "You look so good, you've gotta keep doing it." And that's where the physician's sensibility comes into play.

"The idea is to do the procedure so that the result is as natural as it can be. Loss of some degree of animation is a consideration," Greco says. "If Botox injections are done by a person who has experience with it, they can take away the wrinkles, yet maintain some of the natural facial expression so it doesn't look like the face is frozen." But for some people, too much is not enough. Says Toome, "There are people who are unhappy if they can even slightly raise their brow. I like to leave people with a little bit of movement. You want someone to look natural, but you don't want them to be able to do the contractions that caused the wrinkles in the first place."

THE FUTURE OF BOTOX

Botox, while currently most successfully used on the upper third of the face, is also being used to eradicate wrinkles around the mouth and on the neck. But, as you now know, these applications carry a higher risk of side effects. It has been said by some that Botox also helps prevent migraines. According to Deighan, headaches may be caused by muscle tension. "When the muscle is relaxed, there is no headache." A visit to Allergan's website, www.Botox.com, reveals that studies are underway for the use of Botox in the treatment of juvenile cerebral palsy, headaches, upper limb spasticity and hyperhidrosis, a condition that results in excessive sweating. (At the recently televised Academy Awards show, it was stated that several of the actors and actresses had received Botox injections in their armpits to prevent sweating. We haven't verified this.)

Allergan may have a competitor as early as next year. A drug that is similar to Botox is being used successfully in Europe, and some say it's slated to arrive in the U.S. in the coming months. It's been speculated that FDA approval and competition from other drug companies may drive the price of Botox down, making it accessible to more people. It's also been surmised that, with the popularity of Botox, injections of the drug and others like it may be performed by those who are unqualified or inexperienced. "The American Society for Dermatologic Surgery has emphasized reporting misuses of Botox," says Toome. "That's the only way it will stop." Botox parties, where friends meet to wine and dine before their injections, have been the subjects of newspaper and television reports. "As long as my doctor isn't the one who's been drinking, and as long as he knows what he's doing, what's wrong with celebrating looking years younger?" says one prospective patient.

"It's such a personal thing," says another. "I don't want my friends to know what I'm doing to combat aging. I don't want them present during my eyelid surgery anymore than I want them there for my Botox injections. I'd rather they think I've got great genes."

Botox can be an effective, albeit temporary and expensive fix. "Botox is meant to paralyze the muscle that's causing the wrinkles," says Greco. "It is not going to totally eradicate the wrinkles, although it will improve their appearance. And Botox, when appropriately placed, can actually give the patient a little bit of a brow lift. But the effects are temporary."

"When you look at the hype, people think you can put it anywhere on the face," says Bottger. "But it is limited. At some point, people who keep getting an injection of Botox finally decide they want a permanent, surgical solution to their wrinkles." But until that time comes, Botox might just be a small miracle in a bottle. ■

For more information on the practitioners in this article, please refer to our Buyer's Guide on page 183.



A Work of Art

GARBER
Plastic Surgery

856-489-3600
CHERRY HILL, NJ
Dr. Brett A. Garber · Board Certified