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Things you need to know about Botox explained by Dr Naomi Dolly

What is Botox?

Botox is a brand of Botulinum toxin which is a neurotoxic protein. Although there are many other brands, Botox is the most popular brand of Botulinum neurotoxin. It is commonly used to reduce the appearance of facial wrinkles and fine lines.

How does Botox work?

Botox works by preventing signals from the nerve cells reaching muscles, therefore paralyzing them. This stops the movement that causes facial wrinkles.

Where is Botox used?

Botox is typically used in the facial muscles to relax them and create a smooth, younger looking appearance. It can also be used to treat medical conditions like hyperhidrosis, which is a condition characterised by excessive sweating in the underarms, hands and feet.

What are the benefits of the treatment?

Prior to Botox being used in aesthetics it has extensively been used medically. Some medical uses include blepharospasm (spasm of the eyelids), idiopathic rotational cervical dystonia (severe neck and shoulder muscle spasms), chronic migraine, severe primary axillary hyperhidrosis (excessive sweating), strabismus (crossed eyes) and many more conditions.

How long does Botox take to work?

When you go in for your first Botox treatment, it is important to know that you are not going to see results immediately (following your injections). Instead, you will likely start to notice a difference in your skin 48 hours after your treatment. The full effects of your treatment will not be noticeable for at least two-three weeks following your treatment. Therefore, if you want the treatment done in time for an event that you are attending, you should book an appointment one to two weeks in advance to allow it to take full effect.

Are there any side effects?

Injections with botulinum toxin are generally well tolerated and there are few side effects. There may be mild pain upon injection and post injection bruising. In rare cases, patients may develop an allergic reaction.

How often can one get Botox injections?

It's highly variable and is based on the condition being treated. However, on average for the facial muscles, it lasts for about three to six months.

What are some Botox myths that you would like to debunk for us?

Myth: Botox and fillers are the same thing.
Reality: They have two very different purposes. Botox and fillers are both injections to the face, but Botox relaxes muscles, and fillers replace volume.

Myth: Botox will freeze your face and stop you from expressing full emotions.
Reality: It depends on how much Botox has been used and where it has been injected. A well qualified and trained dermatologist plastic surgeon or oculoplastic surgeon who listens to your goals and discusses expectations should be able to create a softer natural result to your face.

Myth: Treated wrinkles worsen after stopping Botox.
Reality: treated Facial wrinkles would revert to its original state prior to botox treatments

With over six million Botox injections administered each year, it is in fact one of the most popular cosmetic treatments because the results are excellent, the downtime is minimal and, when done correctly, the side effects are nearly non-existent. When you first hear the word Botox, you may think of it as an immediate solution to fine lines and wrinkles. However, due to its popularity and excessive use in Hollywood, many people also think of the negative connotations that are associated with Botox. In fact, many have tried the Botox treatment but to the naked eye it isn't as obvious that such persons have gotten the injections.

The impacts are more than just for aesthetics, especially for those who have excessive sweating; Botox can be used to dramatically reduce the sweating and help with this extremely stressful, embarrassing and confidence-wrecking problem. There are still a lot of myths and misinformation about Botox, including the procedure and the risks. Of course, Botox isn't for everyone, but to clear up any misconceptions for those of you who might be interested, we asked board certified dermatologist and dermatopathologist Doctor Naomi Dolly to explain the treatment so you would be able to tell if this type of treatment is best for you.

