

Botox, Restylane and Fat Injections

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The cosmetic form of botulinum toxin, often referred to by its product name Botox®, is a popular non-surgical injection that temporarily reduces or eliminates frown lines, forehead creases, crows feet near the eyes and thick bands in the neck. The toxin blocks the nerve impulses, temporarily paralyzing the muscles that cause wrinkles while giving the skin a smoother, more refreshed appearance.



As we age, our faces begin to show the effects of gravity, sun exposure and years of facial muscle movement, such as smiling, chewing and squinting. The underlying tissues that keep our skin looking youthful and plumped up begin to break down, often leaving laugh lines, smile lines, crow's feet or facial creases over the areas where this muscle movement occurs.

Soft-tissue fillers, most commonly injectable Restylane or fat, can help fill in these lines and creases, temporarily restoring a smoother, more youthful-looking appearance. When injected beneath the skin, these fillers plump up creased and sunken areas of the face. They can also add fullness to the lips and cheeks. Injectable fillers may be used alone or in conjunction with a resurfacing procedure, such as a laser treatment, or a recontouring procedure, such as a facelift.

Injectables are usually not sufficient for severe surface wrinkles on the face, such as multiple vertical "lipstick lines" that sometimes form around the mouth. Instead, I may suggest a resurfacing technique, such as chemical peel, dermabrasion or laser treatments. Rather than filling in facial lines, resurfacing methods strip away the outer layers of the skin to produce a smoother appearance.

Deep folds in the face or brow caused by overactive muscles or by loose skin may be more effectively treated with cosmetic surgery, such as a facelift or browlift. Injectables are sometimes used in conjunction with facial surgery procedures; however, injectables alone cannot change facial contour the way surgery can.

The most important fact to remember about injectable fillers is that the results are not permanent. Injected material is eventually metabolized by the body. You should not expect the same long-lasting results that may be gained from cosmetic surgery.

In some individuals, the results may last only a few weeks; in others, the results may be maintained indefinitely. Researchers believe that age, genetic background, skin quality and lifestyle as well as the injected body site may all play a role in the injected material's "staying power." However, the precise reason for the variation of results among patients has yet to be identified.

These treatments are usually performed in the office. Immediately following treatment, you may notice some minor discomfort, stinging or throbbing in the injected area. Occasionally some bruising or swelling will occur, but it is usually minor. Any redness that appears in the injected site usually disappears within 24 hours. However, in some individuals, particularly fair-skinned patients, this redness may persist for a week or more. Tiny scabs may also form over the needle-stick areas; these generally heal quickly.

If you're like most patients, you'll be very satisfied with the results of your injectable treatments. You may be surprised at the pleasing results that can be gained from this procedure.