

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

BOTOX

BEAUTY

It is 15 years since the muscle-relaxing injection was licensed to smooth away our lines and soften our frowns. What's next for the jab that changed the face of beauty?

Critics might take a jab at Botox, the muscle-freezing, line-softening cosmetic injectable that was first licensed for use on forehead wrinkles 15 years ago, but there's little doubt that it started a revolution in cosmetic dermatology that has changed the way we think about ageing. Used for more than 30 years in the UK and US, forecasts predict global sales of Botox will reach \$2.9billion (£2.2billion) by 2018.

"The truth is that Botox has been used to soften expression lines for longer than 15 years," explains Dr Massimo Signorini, one of the world's most in-demand and respected cosmetic surgeons, who has been training aesthetic doctors in the use of Botox for 15 years. "It was first developed for squints and for muscle tightening in children with cerebral palsy, but since it received FDA [US Food and Drug Administration] approval for facial lines in the upper face, it has revolutionised the way that cosmetic surgeons and dermatologists treat ageing skin. Doctors and patients today perhaps do not realise quite how revolutionary it was."

Botox, developed by pharmaceutical giant Allergan, is one of the most popular cosmetic treatments worldwide with an estimated 11 million vials of the stuff injected into faces in the US alone since its licence for the treatment of forehead lines in 2002 and for crow's feet in 2014 (if this doesn't seem that long, it's because previously Botox was widely used within aesthetics, simply off-licence). The average age for a woman to first have the treatment is 35 in the UK and the US but 45 in France. So how does it work?

Each jab contains tiny amounts of a highly purified botulinum toxin protein refined from the bacterium *Clostridium botulinum*, at levels that are strong enough to temporarily block the nerve impulses within the muscle but far too small to cause any symptoms of food poisoning that are associated with higher doses. Nerve impulses release a chemical called acetylcholine that causes the muscles to contract and Botox blocks the release of this chemical, making the muscles relax. It is licensed to temporarily soften forehead lines, frown lines and crow's feet. However, many doctors and practitioners use it to soften neck bands, droopy eyelids, uneven smiles and even within the chin to prevent it lifting too much when smiling.

"To understand how Botox changed everything, you need to realise that until it was developed we had nothing short of surgery to correct deep lines," explains Dr Signorini. "We had to cut and re-drape the skin over the muscle and fat and bone, but Botox changed that and gave way to injectables as a way to treat ageing in the face and neck. That in turn led to the development of fillers so that, combined, they can create a liquid facelift without downtime or the need for surgery."

IF YOU ARE TEMPTED TO JOIN THE BOTOX BEAUTY BUNCH, YOU NEED TO KNOW A FEW THINGS FIRST

Who does it? Botox can only be administered by a medical professional – that means a doctor, surgeon, nurse or dentist.

Does it hurt? It is injected using the same needle as for insulin injections in diabetics – it has a very narrow diameter and is short. This means that it is mildly uncomfortable but not painful and you can always ask for numbing cream to be applied first.

How long does it take? Each treatment usually takes around 15 minutes, the number of injections depending on areas being treated. For the forehead expect between six and 15, and for crow's feet about three around each eye. However, many practitioners work on the neck, chin and lower face too.

When will I see results? They do not happen right away as the injection takes a while to kick in. ►



Botox usually takes full effect in between three and ten days.

Will my face still move? Yes, of course, but how much you want your forehead to move is up to you. While some may opt for the “frozen face” look, “baby” Botox is also available. This softens the lines without preventing movement or expression. It is what is known as the “no Botox Botox” look within Hollywood, where many actors and actresses deny having the injections.

How often do I need it done? You might need a top-up after two to three weeks. This is because the best practitioners will err on the side of caution. This top-up should be included in your initial cost. After you are happy with the results, you will then need to go back every four to six months to have the process repeated as Botox does wear off over time.

What can go wrong? If too much of the toxin is injected you can get drooping eyelids and asymmetry. However, this does wear off.

How much will it cost?

Prices vary depending on where you have Botox injected in your face and where your clinic or practitioner is based, but expect to pay around £150 initially.

Where else can it be used? Botox is also used to stop excessive sweating under the armpits, can be used in the jaw muscles to stop teeth grinding and TMD (temporomandibular disorder; jaw pain), and even in the soles of the feet to stop the pain of high heels. These treatments are all off-licence – in other words, they’re not unsafe but not medically recognised as being effective.

What’s next for Botox? Just last month, Allergan stated that it intends to trial the drug for the treatment of depression, based on the theory of “facial feedback”. In other words, stopping a person from frowning could stop them having the depression that makes them frown. So watch this space.

If you are happy with the Botox results you’ll need to have it repeated every four to six months



Plump it up

If you shy away from needles but still want to temporarily plump surface lines, then you need HA in your routine. Hyaluronic acid is not a resurfacing acid but a moisture magnet that can trap up to 1,000 times its weight in water into the top layers of your skin. The result? Instant hydration without heavy oils or moisturisers and a temporary plumping of fine lines. Try these perfect-for-summer gels and serums:

1. Clinique Moisture Surge Hydrating Supercharged Concentrate, £34; visit clinique.co.uk (available from 26 May)
2. Neutrogena Hydro Boost Water Gel Moisturiser, £12.99, from Boots
3. Olay Instant Hydration Day Cream, £9.99, from Boots
4. Estée Lauder Advanced Night Repair, from £53; visit esteelauder.co.uk. Still a classic hyaluronic acid-rich serum for day and night-time use
5. Dr Dennis Gross Hyaluronic Moisture Cushion, £50.50, from cultbeauty.co.uk
6. Eucerin Hyaluron-Filler Concentrate, £31 for six 5ml vials, from Boots
7. Clarins Hydra-Essentiel Cooling Gel, £36; visit clarins.co.uk
8. NIOD Multi-Molecular Hyaluronic Complex, £38, from Selfridges

THE BEST IN THE BUSINESS...

If you’re not sure who to see to try Botox, take your pick from some of our favourite A-list aesthetic doctors:

◆ **DR TAPAN PATEL** is famous for his super-subtle, understated work and calm and reassuring manner. Visit his Harley Street clinic at phclinic.com

◆ **DR JONQUILLE CHANTREY** is Cheshire-based and her clients include stylish Alderley Edge residents. Although well known for treating *Real Housewives of Cheshire* star Missé Beqiri, she also

specialises in treating pigmented skin and scarring as well as injectables and is a fully qualified cosmetic surgeon. Visit drjonquille.co.uk

◆ **DR VICKY DONDOS** understands that a natural look is ideal and will hand-hold you through the entire procedure – great for first-timers. Visit medicetics.com

◆ **DR MICHAEL PRAGER** is one of Europe’s most skilled practitioners of cosmetic medicine and trained under the best in the business – the late Dr Frederick Brandt. Visit

his Wimpole Street clinic at drmichaelprager.com

◆ **DR JEAN-LOUIS SEBAGH** introduced Botox to London in the early 1990s. A-list clients for his beauty treatments include Cindy Crawford and Elle Macpherson. Visit drsebagh.com

◆ **DR SARAH TONKS** specialises in facial injectables including brow-lifting Botox and volume-replacing and lifting filler. Visit her Chelsea clinic at theloveyclinic.co.uk

◆ **DR KATE GOLDIE** has a practice in Henley (tel: 0149-

157 3344) and Glasgow (tel: 0141-248 6297), offering facial aesthetics. She speaks and teaches on aesthetic treatments and states that her aim is to do work so that you don’t look done, just better

◆ **DR TIM PEARCE** is a Manchester-based doctor specialising in non-surgical skin treatments. He runs SkinViva, a school for doctors, dentists and nurses to learn aesthetic procedures. Visit drtimepearce.co.uk

◆ **DR DAVID ECCLESTON** has 18 years of experience and is

an accredited Save Face practitioner based in Birmingham. Visit medizen.co.uk

◆ **ANNIE CARTWRIGHT** is a registered nurse based in Cardiff who specialises in non-surgical aesthetic treatments. Visit anniecartwright.com

◆ **WOODFORD MEDICAL** has clinics in London, Leamington Spa, Belfast, Cambridge and Essex and is run by Dr Mervyn Patterson and Dr Hilary Allan. This award-winning partnership specialises in subtle injectables, laser and filler treatments. Visit woodfordmedical.com