

ask the expert

PLASTIC SURGEON DR KOUROSH TAVAKOLI EXPLAINS EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT **BOTOX**.



Dr Kourosh Tavakoli, FRACS, a fully qualified plastic surgeon, has a passion for cosmetic surgery. He has trained with leading surgeons in the world and is a member of the Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons and the Australasian Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery.

What is Botox and how does it work?

Botox is a natural, purified protein derived from bacteria, just as penicillin is derived from mould. Administered in tiny injections, it works by blocking the nerve impulses that trigger wrinkle-causing muscle contractions.

What are the target areas Botox is used for?

The approved indication states that Botox can be injected between the eyebrows in the frown line (or glabellar lines). There are further studies being conducted to ensure the safety of injecting Botox into other areas of the face. Botox

relaxes wrinkle-causing muscles, creating a smoothed and improved appearance. Repeat injections of Botox can prevent the onset and/or deepening of wrinkles.

How long does the effect last?

The cosmetic effects of Botox are usually noticeable within one week of treatment and results can last for three to six months. The procedure takes up to 15 minutes and you can resume normal activity immediately.

What are the possible side effects?

Temporary side effects that may be experienced with Botox can include tenderness and bruising at the site of injection. Less frequent side effects include headache, temporary eyelid droop and nausea. Botox is a medical product and the amounts used both therapeutically and cosmetically could not lead to poisoning or botulism.

Botox is best known as a treatment for facial wrinkles, but it is also a medication that has been safely used in adults and children as young as two, to treat a broad range of medical conditions, such as cerebral palsy, post-stroke related spasticity and cervical dystonia [neck spasms].

Cosmetically, Botox is the only product of its type with more than 10 years of successful clinical experience in treating frown lines and wrinkles.

Who is the ideal candidate for Botox?

I am finding that the best candidate is someone in their late 20s to early 50s who is concerned about wrinkle lines in the forehead region and around the eyes [crow's feet]. Botox eliminates the frown lines temporarily and prevents long-term formation of permanent wrinkles, which do not respond to the use of this product.

Unfortunately, Botox can't treat all problems. The rate of patients undergoing cosmetic brow-lift has decreased, due to the success of Botox, yet there are patients who will need a surgical procedure to lift droopy eyebrows and eliminate deeper wrinkles. This can now be achieved permanently via small incisions in the scalp and the use of an endoscope. Endoscopic brow-lift is performed under general anaesthetic in an operating theatre by plastic surgeons trained in cosmetic surgery.

How do you choose the right practitioner?

Botox should be given by a qualified medical practitioner who knows how to administer it correctly. Furthermore, a detailed knowledge of muscular anatomy of the forehead and eye area is imperative for success. A variety of doctors can administer Botox – ranging from plastic surgeons to dermatologists and some GPs with special interest in cosmetic medicine. Ask your practitioner if he or she has been trained in the Botox injection technique. **W**

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