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## **Botox**

Botox is the brand name of a toxin produced by the bacterium *Clostridium botulinum*. In large amounts, this toxin can cause botulism, which you probably associate with food poisoning. Despite the fact that one of the most serious complications of botulism is paralysis, scientists have discovered a way to use it to human advantage. Small, diluted amounts can be directly injected into specific muscles causing controlled weakening of the muscles. The FDA approved such usage in the late 1980s upon the discovery that Botox could stop ailments like blepharospasm (uncontrolled blinking) and strabismus (lazy eye). Cosmetic physicians have been using Botox for years to successfully treat wrinkles and facial creases. In April 2002, Botox gained FDA approval for treatment of moderate-to-severe frown lines between the eyebrows - called glabellar lines. However, Botox is often used for other areas of the face as well.

### **How Does Botox Work?**

Botox blocks signals from the nerves to the muscles. The injected muscle can no longer contract, which causes the wrinkles to relax and soften. It is most often used on forehead lines, crow's feet (lines around the eye) and frown lines. Wrinkles caused by sun damage and gravity will not respond to Botox.

### **Procedural Description**

The procedure takes only a few minutes and no anesthesia is required. Botox is injected with a fine needle into specific muscles with only minor discomfort. It generally takes three to seven days to take full effect and it is best to avoid alcohol at least one week prior to treatment. Aspirin and anti-inflammatory medications should be stopped two weeks before treatment as well in

order to reduce bruising.

## **How Long Does a Botox Injection Last?**

The effects from Botox will last four to six months. As muscle action gradually returns, the lines and wrinkles begin to re-appear and wrinkles need to be re-treated. The lines and wrinkles often appear less severe with time because the muscles are being trained to relax.

## **Side Effects**

Side effects resulting from Botox are few and extremely minor. The most common side effect is bruising, which often can be avoided if patient refrains from rubbing injected site for 12 hours. Headaches, which resolve in 24-48 hours, can occur, but this is rare. A small percentage of patients may develop eyelid drooping, which usually resolves in three weeks.

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## **Injectable Fillers**

Injectable fillers are one of the most popular facial rejuvenation techniques. As we age, the underlying tissues that keep our skin looking youthful and firm begin to break down due to the effects of gravity, sun exposure, diet, genetic factors, and years of facial muscle movement. Over time these factors contribute to the development of lines, wrinkles, and folds in the face.

## **Hyaluronic Acid**

Hyaluronic acid is a naturally occurring complex sugar molecule that forms large matrices in the

connective tissue of the body, such as skin and cartilage. Much like a sponge, its primary function is to bind and absorb water molecules, which creates volume in the face. Hyaluronic acid fillers are generally used to treat facial wrinkles and folds and to enhance the appearance of the lips. One of the fastest growing dermal filler treatments available, hyaluronic acid fillers work by replacing the hyaluronic acid in the body that has depleted over time, which restores the volume beneath the skin's surface.

## Collagen

Collagen makes up the majority of the dermis. Much like the framework of a house, its primary function is to provide structure and support to the skin. First employed over twenty years ago, collagen injections are generally used to treat facial lines, wrinkles, and scars, and to enhance the appearance of the lips. Collagen fillers replace the collagen that has depleted over time, restoring the structure beneath the skin's surface.

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## Microdermabrasion

Microdermabrasion is one of the most popular non-invasive cosmetic procedures performed today. Over time, factors such as aging, genetic factors, sun damage, acne, scarring, and enlarged pores can contribute to the formation of facial wrinkles and a rough skin texture on the face. Most commonly used to treat the face and neck, microdermabrasion can successfully reduce the appearance of superficial wrinkles and scars, large pores, acne, and age spots, restoring a smoother, more youthful appearance. During microdermabrasion, fine crystals usually remove the superficial or uppermost layer of the epidermis, known as the stratum corneum. Depending on the extent of skin damage, deeper treatment may be necessary; however, treatment rarely extends beyond the epidermis. As a result, microdermabrasion is not appropriate for the treatment of deeper wrinkles and scars, or extensive discoloration as these conditions likely extend into the dermis. In these instances chemical peels and laser resurfacing may achieve more desirable results. As microdermabrasion only causes superficial injury to the skin, the risk of scarring and pigmentation anomalies following microdermabrasion is extremely

low, when compared with other resurfacing techniques. Therefore, microdermabrasion can be safely and effectively used on individuals of all skin types.

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## **Hair Transplantation**

This is a technique that makes it possible to obtain a natural looking, permanent result with your own growing, healthy hair. In a single session, micro and minigrafts are removed from an ellipse of scalp from the back of the head and then inserted in the area to be treated.

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