



Botox

What is Botulinum Toxin?

Botulinum toxin is a chemical produced by the botulinum bacteria. Botox is a protein derivative of the toxin, which, when injected into a muscle causes it to become weakened or inactivated. It stops the muscle from functioning by blocking neuromuscular transmission, in other words it stops the chemical messages from the nerve to the muscle.

How does it work?

By using facial muscles repeatedly throughout a lifetime, the skin is creased in areas of greatest use. The ageing process causes the slow down of collagen and elastin production in the skin so as we get older, these areas of over-use become damaged and the lines become permanent. By reducing the movement of muscles in these areas, the skin stops being creased and it's allowed to recover, causing the lines to soften or even fade away. In the areas treated the muscles are temporarily inactivated, during which time the patients can break the subconscious habit of overusing these muscles.

How long has Botox been in use?

Botox has been in use as long ago as 1978, Botox was used as a treatment for patients with eye squints by weakening the over active eye muscle. Since then, it had been used in a variety of therapeutic areas such as spasmodic neck, writer's cramp, tics, multiple sclerosis, facial spasm, Parkinson's Disease and Cerebral Palsy. In more recent years the use of Botox for cosmetic therapy has become more widespread.

How safe is Botox?

In high concentrations botulinum toxin is a potent poison. However, Botox used in minute doses, as is the case in cosmetic medicine, has a very high margin of safety.

What happens during treatment?

The procedure takes about 15 to 20 minute. The Aesthetic Nurse Prescriber will use certain muscles of the face to observe how they work. An extremely fine, short needle is used to inject Botox into appropriate area/s. This may cause some slight but brief discomfort. The area may have some slight redness and swelling, which normally resolves in an hour or two. The treatment normally starts to take effect after the 4th day up to the 14th day. The effects will normally last between 3-6 months, when you will start to notice an ability to move the muscles more freely.

Are there any side effects?

Side effects of this treatment are rare. Occasionally a temporary drooping of the eyelid can occur. This may last a few weeks, but will always resolve. Special eye drops can be prescribed during this time to help lift the lid back into normal position. In extremely rare cases patients have developed an allergy to the treatment, while others have shown resistance, for instance it causes little or no effect on the treated muscles.