

Saint Luke's Dermatology
4320 Wornall Road, Suite 513
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TREATING WRINKLES WITH BOTOX® COSMETIC

Wrinkles are born of squinting, smiling, frowning – any facial movement – as well as time and aging. Botox can be used to relax these muscles, preventing squinting and frowning, which improves the appearance of wrinkles and may prevent them from worsening. At this time, Botox is the only FDA approved treatment in the US for this indication, and it has been safely used for facial wrinkles since the very early 1980's.

IN PREPARATION:

For 10 days prior to your appointment, avoid supplements or medications that make you bruise, such as medications that reduce inflammation (Ibuprofen products like Advil and Motrin), as well as aspirin, green tea, Vitamin E, Ginkgo Biloba, and Saint John's Wort. However, you may take Tylenol, which does not affect blood platelet function like these others do. Purchase a product containing arnica or Vitamin K, and/or Retinol, which can be applied after the procedure to prevent and treat bruises.

On the day of your treatment try to be as relaxed as you can. Remember, this really is easy. If you'd like, we will apply a topical anesthetic cream to the area being treated, usually the forehead, between the brows, or the crow's feet at the outside corners of the eyes, about 20 minutes before the treatment begins.

WHAT TO EXPECT:

The treatment involves injections via a tiny needle, which is about the size of an acupuncture needle. When a topical anesthetic is used first, most people don't feel the injections. Frown lines usually require 3 injections, crow's feet receive 3 injections per side, and lines in the forehead usually get 5-8 injections. Following treatment, your skin will have a few raised bumps in the area of injection that look like insect bites. These typically last about 30 minutes. Bruising can also occur (though this is more likely in redheads), so remember to apply the Arnica or Vitamin K and Retinol at the first sign of bruising.

FOLLOW UP CARE AFTER BOTOX:

After the injections, move the muscles in the treated areas off and on for 10 minutes. In other words if you had frown lines treated, you should frown and relax, frown and relax repeatedly. Patients can immediately resume all skin care and make up use after the treatment. Avoid facials, facial massage, steam rooms, saunas, vigorous exercise and hot showers for 4 hours because these may increase your risk of bruising.

SIDE EFFECTS:

The most common side effect is bruising which can be prevented by avoiding the medications and supplements mentioned above. Treating the forehead can result in heaviness of the upper

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eyelids. This resolves in one week in some cases, however, it may last for the duration of the Botox treatment. Droopiness of the eyelid (ptosis) rarely occurs after injection of the frown lines. Treatment of the crow's feet may give an unnatural look if you have many wrinkles on the middle part of the lower eyelid. Your doctor will evaluate your unique facial structure and tell you if you are a good candidate for Botox.

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER BOTOX:

After 3 days you will notice decreased movement in the treated area. It takes 10 days for the full effects to be seen. Return to see us in 2 weeks if you are not happy with the results. If you can make the treated area move by flexing the muscles or if you notice any asymmetry – uneven results on one side or the ability to move only on one side – the treatment hasn't worked as it should. If this is the case, make an appointment to see if you need more Botox to treat the asymmetry.

TREATMENT RESULTS:

Your wrinkles themselves may not completely disappear but the muscles underneath them should quit moving. It may take 4-8 months without movement before the wrinkles begin to smooth out, which they will do especially if you are following the recommended skin care regimen at the same time. (All patients should be using daily sunscreen and a retinoid prescription product such as Tazarac, Differin, or Retin A). Botox injections provide temporary wrinkle correction so expect to return for follow up treatments every 3-6 months. It is better not to let the Botox completely wear off because this will help prevent the wrinkles from returning.