

Is BOTOX Safe for the Body?

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The most popular cosmetic treatment in the United States is BOTOX injections to treat wrinkles. In 2007, the latest year for statistics, the American Society of Plastic Surgeons reports that more than 4.5 million BOTOX treatments were given. The percentage of increase for the procedure since 2000 has grown by 488 percent. Despite this astonishing numbers, critics try to create fear of this treatment by attempting to link BOTOX to major health issues including death. The question of whether or not BOTOX is safe for the body can be seen when closely examining the evidence.

Monitoring by the FDA

The Food and Drug Administration closely monitors all forms of drugs for medical and cosmetic purposes. In 1991, the FDA initially approved the use of BOTOX, a commercial form of botulinum toxin, for use in treating minor muscle spasms of the eye and other areas. Doctors noticed that after the injections, the wrinkles that appear between the eyes were minimized. Soon, doctors began to use BOTOX for cosmetic wrinkle reduction. The FDA continues to monitor and regulate the efficacy of BOTOX.

BOTOX is a neurotoxin that inhibits muscle contraction, basically paralyzing the muscles that cause wrinkles when applied locally. There are many other uses for BOTOX that lie outside the scope of cosmetic surgery and most of the reported complications relate to other uses. Some of those uses include,

- Blepharospasm uncontrollable twitching of the eye
- Cervical dystonia uncontrollable neck contractions
- Hyperhidrosis uncontrollable sweating
- Strabismus an eye condition that affects binocular vision and depth perception

Reported Complications and Deaths

As with all medical and pharmacological procedures, complications may arise and in some severe cases may even lead to death.

- Between 1989 and 2003 there were 28 deaths related to botulinum toxin according to the FDA
- In 2008 the FDA reported that BOTOX was linked to some cases of respiratory failure after migrating from the injection spot
- Several deaths have been reported with the use of BOTOX knockoffs

None of the deaths was related to cosmetic uses of BOTOX and it remains a safe treatment for cosmetic procedures.

Other complications with cosmetic use include,

- Bruising at injection site
- Headaches
- Muscle weakness
- Difficulty swallowing
- Paralysis of the wrong muscle
- Allergic reaction

Bruising is the most common complaint and is typically a problem with the injection procedure not the medication.

Find a Qualified Cosmetic Surgeon

In order to minimize the risks and complications it is important to seek the services of a qualified cosmetic surgeon who is a member of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons. Cosmetic surgeons are medical specialists who undergo additional years of specialized medicine after their medical degree. In order to maintain their membership in the ASPS, they must undergo continuous training and keep abreast of all the latest treatments and technologies.

Most cosmetic surgeons will have many before and after pictures that they can show you so you can get a good idea as to how the treatment will affect your appearance. A full medical history is taken so the doctor can create an effective treatment plan, taking into consideration your overall health. In some cases, the use of BOTOX may not be safe and would be contra-indicated. Selecting a qualified and trained surgeon will help reduce potential danger.

To find out more about BOTOX and how it can be used to reduce wrinkles safely and effectively, please visit the website of Dr. Paul Angelchik, M.D. today, serving the Phoenix, Arizona area.