

What Is Botox and What Should I Expect During Treatment?

Botox is an injectable treatment that temporarily relaxes specific facial muscles that contribute to wrinkles and fine lines. It is commonly used to soften forehead lines, frown lines between the eyebrows, and crow's feet around the eyes. When carefully placed, Botox can soften wrinkles while allowing you to maintain natural facial expression. At Calvert Dermatology, Botox treatments are customized based on your facial anatomy, muscle movement, and cosmetic goals. The goal is not to change the way you look, but to create a refreshed and natural appearance.

What is Botox?

Botox is a brand name for a purified form of botulinum toxin. When injected into specific muscles, it temporarily reduces the nerve signals that cause those muscles to contract. As the muscles relax, the overlying skin appears smoother and certain wrinkles become less noticeable. Botox is different from a dermal filler. Botox works primarily by reducing muscle activity, while fillers are used to restore or add volume in areas where fullness has been lost.

What areas can Botox treat?

Botox is commonly used to treat forehead lines, frown lines between the eyebrows and crow's feet around the eyes. At Calvert Dermatology, treatment may also be considered for other areas depending on your individual anatomy and goals. For example, our practice offers masseter treatment, which can be used to reduce the activity and size of the chewing muscles in appropriate patients.

Not every wrinkle will improve with Botox. Wrinkles caused primarily by sun damage, skin laxity, or loss of volume may require a different treatment approach. During your consultation, we can discuss whether Botox or another treatment is appropriate for the concerns you want to address.

Who may benefit from Botox?

Botox may be an option for adults who are bothered by facial lines that become more noticeable with facial movement. The best candidates are not necessarily looking for a dramatic change. Many patients simply want their forehead or frown lines to look softer while still looking like themselves.

At Calvert Dermatology, we take the time to look at how your facial muscles move before deciding where treatment should be performed. The number and location of injections are individualized rather than using the same treatment for every patient.

What should I expect during a Botox treatment?

Botox is performed as an office procedure using a very fine needle. The treatment area is examined and the appropriate muscles and injection sites are identified before the injections are given. The injections themselves are usually quick, and do not require anesthesia. You may feel a brief pinch or mild discomfort with each injection. Small bumps can temporarily appear at the injection sites and usually settle shortly afterward. The amount of Botox used depends on the areas being treated, your muscle activity, and your individual treatment plan.

When will I see results?

Botox does not work immediately. Most people begin to notice an improvement within several days, with the effect becoming more apparent over the following days. The American Academy of Dermatology notes that results are often visible within 3 to 7 days, although individual results vary. The improvement generally lasts about 3 to 4 months, and sometimes longer.

As the effect wears off, the treated muscles gradually regain their movement and the wrinkles may become visible again. Patients who want to maintain their results can discuss the appropriate timing for repeat treatment with their dermatologist.

What are the side effects, and is it safe?

Botox is generally well tolerated, but side effects can occur. Common temporary effects include redness, swelling, bruising, soreness at the injection sites, and a mild headache. Your dermatologist will review your medical history and medications before treatment. It is important to tell your provider about medications, supplements, previous cosmetic treatments, and any medical conditions that may affect your treatment.

Botox has been used medically and cosmetically for many years. However, like any medical procedure, it is not completely risk-free. One important part of safe treatment is having injections performed by a qualified medical professional who understands facial anatomy and the effects of botulinum toxin. The American Academy of Dermatology recommends receiving botulinum toxin injections from a board-certified dermatologist or appropriately trained medical staff under a dermatologist's supervision. At Calvert Dermatology, cosmetic treatments are performed under the direction of board-certified physicians, and treatment plans are individualized based on each patient's anatomy and goals.

Bottom Line

Botox is a temporary treatment that relaxes specific facial muscles to soften dynamic wrinkles such as forehead lines, frown lines, and crow's feet. Treatment is relatively quick, and most patients can return to their normal activities afterward. Results typically develop over several days and last about 3 to 4 months. At Calvert Dermatology, our approach is to create subtle, natural-looking results by tailoring treatment to your individual facial anatomy and goals. If you are considering Botox, a consultation can help determine whether it is the right treatment for you and what results you can reasonably expect.

Frequently Asked Questions

How long does Botox last?

Results generally last about 3 to 4 months, although this varies from person to person. Some patients may notice that their results last longer or shorter than this.

Can I still make facial expressions after Botox?

Yes. The goal is to relax the specific muscles responsible for the treated wrinkles while maintaining natural facial movement. The amount of treatment can be adjusted based on your desired result.

Can Botox treat all types of wrinkles?

No. Botox works best on wrinkles related to muscle movement. Wrinkles caused primarily by sun damage, skin laxity, or loss of facial volume may respond better to other treatment

Does Botox hurt?

Most patients tolerate Botox injections well. A very small needle is used, discomfort is generally brief. If you are nervous about injections, let us know. We can discuss ways to make the experience as comfortable as possible.

References

1. **American Academy of Dermatology.** *Botulinum Toxin Therapy: Overview.*
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3. **U.S. Food and Drug Administration.** *BOTOX Cosmetic Prescribing Information.*
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4. **American Society of Plastic Surgeons.** *Botulinum Toxin: Recovery and Safety.*
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