



lose your '11's

According to ocular plastic surgeon **Deborah Sherman MD**, from Nashville, TN, the severe lines that form the number '11' between your brows can make you appear angry and stressed, even though you might feel perfectly happy. Lise Taylor reports.

As a little girl, I remember asking my mother why she had two severe lines between her eyebrows. 'They're my worry lines,' mom replied. 'They appeared because I frowned too much when I was really stressed, and now they won't go away.' Right then, aged five, I resolved not to be worried or stressed at all costs, to avoid getting the harsh lines that formed the number '11' at the top of my mommy's nose – an easy concept to grasp when you're five. But really, is it possible to remain calm, happy and wrinkle-free in this day and age? The answer is both no and yes: no, it is not possible to avoid stress and worry; but yes, it is possible to avoid getting the number '11' indelibly imprinted between your eyes.

Ocular plastic surgeon Deborah Sherman MD, from Nashville, TN, says Botulinum Toxin Type A, better known as Botox, is a quick and effective way to remove wrinkles from the glabella region in between the eyebrows, otherwise known as the 'angry' or number '11' lines. Botox involves a series of injections into the region and can temporarily smooth moderate to severe frown lines between the brows.

'Botox is a purified protein that works by relaxing the dominant frown muscles of the face that cause the formation of two vertical lines between the eyebrows. It works simply by putting the '11' muscles in a temporary time-out by blocking the nerve impulses that put the frown muscles into overdrive. Purified protein is a key concept in the removal of the '11' lines because, when

it is injected in minute amounts, it creates a dramatic effect as far as generating a positive facial message is concerned,' Dr. Sherman says.

Currently in America, Botox only has FDA approval to be used for the glabella lines. However, most doctors also use Botox 'off label', that is in the areas that haven't been approved by the FDA. 'I use Botox in areas such as the crow's feet and horizontal forehead wrinkles, in the lower face to turn the corners of the mouth up and for orange-peel consistency chins. I also use it for the platysmal bands and horizontal necklace lines around the neck,' Dr. Sherman admits.

The effects of Botox treatment are temporary. 'Results are noticeable from two to seven days after treatment, and this lasts for up to four months or longer, depending on the patient,' she says.

What about safety? Dr. Sherman explains there are numerous medical uses for Botox: 'For over 15 years doctors have treated millions of patients with cosmetic concerns as well as with serious neurological conditions such as cervical dystonia and juvenile cerebral palsy. In fact, it has been approved for 20 indications in over 75 countries. Botox is one of the most widely researched treatments in the world.'

When Botox was studied for FDA approval, some side effects were detected, though. These included headaches, nausea, respiratory infection, and temporary eyelid droop. But as Dr. Sherman explains, these side effects are rare.

'Patients are more likely to have a temporary bruise,' she says. Dr. Sherman doesn't recommend Botox to pregnant or breastfeeding mothers, however, 'because adequate controlled studies of the drug have not been performed.'

Dr. Sherman has worked closely with Allergan, the pharmaceutical company responsible for developing Botox, to establish the 'Lose your 11' campaign, a project designed to focus attention on the use of Botox in the glabella region of the face, and to disperse the myths surrounding the drug. She explains the campaign is aimed at beauty professionals or people in the beauty industry who have influence on the general public.

'I have traveled extensively and talked with beauty buzz-makers, who have told me that few people realize the impact these lines have on their face. The '11' lines can make people look angry, tired or stressed. Even when they feel fine, their face sends a message that they are unaware of. When the lines are treated with Botox, the reactions from others are much more positive. Teachers, mums, footballs coaches and business people will all notice a positive change,' she says.

'Botox is the only FDA-approved treatment for the glabella lines and it is important that beauty buzz-makers understand the treatment and why it is used. This

is because so many people go to professionals such as hair stylists, personal shoppers and cosmetologists for advice because they want to look their best.'

There is no preparation needed for Botox treatment other than to research and find the right doctor. Dr. Sherman recommends her patients see a specialist in cosmetic medicine, plastic surgery, ophthalmology or dermatology. To help prospective patients with their research, she says there is a list of nationally trained physicians on the website www.loseyour11.com.

'Do not trust an untrained physician. Botox is a technique-sensitive procedure and it will result in a smoothed appearance when administered by a trained physician. Every dose of Botox needs to be customized to each individual because every face is unique. The advantage of Botox is that patients can tell their doctor exactly what they want to achieve and can play a role in customizing how much expression they want to have,' she concludes.

And if you're still concerned, you can take comfort in the following statistic from a recent American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery study: the satisfaction rate in patients polled across the US who had used Botox stood at 97 percent. **cbm**

FAQS

Q What is Botox?

A Botox is a diluted form of botulinum toxin, a purified protein manufactured in a pharmaceutical laboratory. It acts by reducing the nerve stimulation to muscle and therefore induces relaxation. It is administered by a few tiny injections under the skin. It works by relaxing wrinkle-causing muscles, allowing the wrinkles to relax away and leaving facial expression free of lines or at least significantly reduced.

Q Which lines can I treat with Botox?

A Botox is commonly used to treat the crow's feet around the eyes, the central frown lines between the eyebrows (glabella lines) and the worry lines across the forehead. Botox represents the treatment of choice (best treatment) for these lines. The marionette lines, or sad lines, from the corner of the mouth to the chin are also very effectively treated with Botox.

Q How long will it last?

A Botox will continue to prevent and reduce facial lines

and wrinkles for three to four months but sometimes up to six months or longer. Following treatment, the results are not immediately apparent. It usually takes two days to begin to relax away lines.

Q What are the side effects?

A Common side effects are restricted to minor and temporary redness, swelling or bruising at the injection site. Very rarely laziness of an eyelid or mild double vision is reported. These effects are temporary, lasting one to two weeks, and will occur if the injections are inappropriately placed. Recovery is spontaneous.

Q I have heard that Botox will produce a blank, expressionless face. Is this true?

A No. The three important terms in Botox therapy are 'character', 'natural', and 'youthful'. Character makes the face interesting, gives insight into the personality and is often very attractive. By skilled placement of Botox, attractive character can indeed be maintained. A natural appearance is achieved by preserving normal expression while relaxing unwanted lines. A youthful appearance is created by softening those features that negatively reflect the aging process, such as the extension of crow's feet, forehead furrows and sagging brows. With careful placement, an experienced Botox injector can achieve a youthful appearance on a patient while maintaining their natural expression with character. **cbm**