

Botox® Myths

When I first started injecting Botox®, around 15 years ago, it would have never crossed my mind that it would become as enduringly popular as it has. Nor would I have guessed we would have patients who have consistently showed up for injections every few months since the very beginning. In this article, I will share a few observations about Botox® and its competitor Dysport® to hopefully dispel a few myths. Much of the information presented here is based on my own observations rather than a formal study. Also, for the purposes of this article, I will use the generic term “neurotoxin” so that the statements could apply either to Botox® or Dysport®. Our practice uses both products interchangeably, primarily based on the patient’s preference and their individual experience.

Does neurotoxin build up in your system with long term use?

No, neurotoxin always wear off completely. No studies have shown any evidence of toxin buildup or other adverse effects from long term use. So, what have we observed in folks who have used neurotoxin regularly for years? They simply have not made wrinkles like folks who did not use it or used it only occasionally. In fact, the difference can be rather astonishing. While neurotoxin may not generally be thought of as an “anti-aging” medication, it certainly decreases the visible aging process where facial wrinkles are concerned.

If I use neurotoxin repetitively, will it last longer? Our observations have not supported that commonly held belief. It seems that each patient has an individual amount of time that their body takes to wear off the effect of the neurotoxin and that does not change over time. For example, if the first neurotoxin injection lasts you 4 months, each subsequent injection will likely also last 4 months. Although the duration of the neurotoxin does not seem to increase over time, the clinical results will likely be better with repeated use. Keeping the wrinkle-causing muscles suppressed avoids recurrence of the wrinkle so long as the injections are repeated prior to complete loss of the effect.

Who should inject neurotoxin? Each state regulates the types of practitioner who may legally perform injections. Included among legally authorized injectors in Kentucky are physicians, registered nurses, and dentists. You should consider the specific training and experience of the injector. Performing neurotoxin treatments is as much of an art as a science. Safety comes first, so the injector must have a good knowledge of the facial anatomy. But they also should possess a good eye for achieving the desired aesthetic result. Both nurse-injector, Carey Sanders, RN and I perform injections in our office. Each of us has performed thousands of injections. We both take great care to achieve the wrinkle reduction goal while preserving a normal, natural appearance. A standardized charting system which pinpoints the quantity and location of each injection site allows us to maintain consistency over time and between injectors.

When is the right age to start using neurotoxin?

As with many plastic surgery procedures, age is a less important factor than the indications and goals of treatment. For example, if you have vertical wrinkles in between your eyebrows which stay all the time regardless of whether you are smiling or not, you may be a candidate for neurotoxin, regardless of your age. It generally makes treatment simpler to start neurotoxin treatment before wrinkles become very deep. If the wrinkles are shallow, they will likely go away completely with neurotoxin treatment alone. If they are deeper, additional procedures may be necessary to achieve the best effect. The experienced injector can provide valuable insight to achieve the goal in the safest, most effective manner.

Our practice periodically runs specials on neurotoxin injections, dermal filler treatments, and occasionally surgical procedures. Please visit our website, kirnplasticsurgery.com and visit the “Specials” page.



Dr. David Kim is a Board Certified Plastic Surgeon who is devoted to advanced techniques in Cosmetic Surgery of the Face, Breast, and Body. In private practice since 1998, he is located in a state of the art facility which includes a full service skin care center. The practice is focused on personalized patient care and attention to detail. Where possible, Dr. Kim utilizes minimally invasive procedures. The goal is to deliver quality clinical results while minimizing patient recovery time. Examples of this include a no-drain tummy tuck, armpit incision breast augmentation with gel or saline implants, fat grafting, and a short scar facelift (the MACS lift). In addition, Dr. Kim and nurse-injector Carey Sanders, RN offer a full spectrum of non-surgical treatments such as Dysport®, Botox®, Restylane®, Juvederm®, Radiesse®, and laser.

