

# THE BROTOX CODE

Would you use injectables to retain your youth, or are you happy to ride the ageing train?

One of the biggest trends in the male-grooming industry over the past few years is 'brotox', literally 'Botox for bros'. But even if you have your grooming regimen waxed, you can be forgiven for being a little behind the times on this one. Now's your chance to play catch-up and get the low-down on the anti-ageing treatment many South African men have been clamouring for.

'Women have been having needles pricked and prodded in their faces since the late '90s to keep the wrinkles away,' says Dr Jan Nel of Pulse Dermatology and Laser in Cape Town, 'and now it's the men's turn.' According to Dr Nel, more and more men are visiting him for what he calls a little 'time-freeze'. 'It really isn't only a procedure aimed at women any more – men also see the need to keep up a younger appearance.'

## WHAT?

Used since 1988 and known to the world as Botox, the scientific name is actually botulinum toxin type A. This is a purified neurotoxic protein derived primarily from bacteria called *Clostridium botulinum* and sold as either Botox or Dysport.

## WHY?

According to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, the number of people having Botox treatments has increased by 310% over the past 10 years, with a rise of six percent from 2013 to 2014.

'Men want a youthful look, especially for work,' explains Pulse Dermatology owner Amy Bowie. 'Our society nowadays shuns the old and as soon as a wrinkle appears, men are worried they will get replaced by a younger option.'

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## WHERE?

Botox treatments can be used on several areas of the face (and even body), such as the forehead, between the brows, around the eyes and the mouth, and on the neck. 'It's injected into your skin, where it then "irons" out the wrinkles and lines,' explains Dr Nel. 'A session doesn't take very long (between five and 15 minutes) and all one feels is a pinprick.'

## HOW?

Botulinum toxin blocks muscular nerve signals, offering temporary weakening and paralysis of these muscles to prevent them from contracting. The result? Significantly diminished facial lines and wrinkles, and often a complete disappearance of dermal expression lines for the full duration of the treatment's active phase. 'You should see an improvement within just four days of treatment, with the final results visible after two weeks,' says Dr Xen Ludick,

## STYLE GROOMING

GP and part of the team at Skin & Body Renewal in Johannesburg. 'Results can last up to four months, depending on the patient, with longer lasting results after several treatment sessions.'

## WHAT DO MEN WANT?

'Discretion and a very natural look,' says Dr Ludick. 'Men are now where women were a few years ago. They are testing the waters.' And with the market growing at such a rapid rate, it's clear that more and more men are becoming curious to learn about these types of skincare treatments and anti-ageing practices. 'Men are also very keen on prevention,' says Dr Ludick. 'It is a normal human trait to want to look your best. The biggest shift is in the public's consciousness of good skincare, in synergy with protective steps like Botox or Dysport.'

## IS IT SAFE?

As with all legitimate medical treatments, the answer is 'Yes, if done right'. Botox is derived from a very dangerous neurotoxin, but it is also one of the most extensively researched drugs in the world and has long been approved by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA). According to Skin Renewal, in addition to its known cosmetic indications, 'botulinum toxin has been used safely for over 20 years for the treatment of muscle disorders of the eyes and voice box, headaches, spasticity of the stomach, spasticity associated with cerebral palsy and other neuromuscular disorders'. It's even used on babies to treat certain medical conditions and can be a remedy for hyperhidrosis (uncontrollable sweating) in adults – something to consider if you often reach for the super-strength deo, pat yourself down with towels and keep your armpits hidden. Just have it done by a reputable doctor, okay? **Man**

## ASK THE EXPERTS

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