

## Who Should Not Use Botox

Botox is considered one of the most popular and effective ways to get rid of most wrinkles. Aside from its ability to smoothen out wrinkles, botox injections may also be used to treat conditions like neck spasms, hyperhidrosis, and lazy eye. Like other medications however, there are certain people who should not undergo this treatment.

Who are the people who shouldn't be using Botox, then? Among those who should not be using Botox are pregnant or breastfeeding women, people with neuromuscular disorders, and people with neurological diseases. If you are considering getting Botox injections, it's important to learn first about the possible risks and effects it may have on your body.

### Is Botox Safe?

Botox is created from *Clostridium botulinum*, a bacterium present in natural settings such as soil, lakes, and forests. This bacteria produces a substance from botulinum toxin, from which Botox is derived. This is the neurotoxin responsible for botulism, a rare illness which attacks the body's nerves and severely weakens the muscles that control the body.

Botox manufacturers use a very small amount of botulinum toxin to produce the Botox cosmetic, which can temporarily paralyze the muscles without the botulinum toxin's lethal effects. Botox injections prevent nerves from releasing acetylcholine, the neurotransmitter that controls muscle contractions. When the acetylcholine is "switched off", the muscles can relax.

This is why Botox is perfectly safe and can be used to smooth out wrinkles, frown lines, and forehead creases from a period of 3-12 months.

### What are the Other Uses of Botox?

Aside from taking care of facial wrinkles, Botox is also approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for conditions such as: eye twitching, eyelid spasms, cervical dystonia, muscle contractures and excessive sweating (or hyperhidrosis). Other studies have also found that it can be used to treat chronic migraines and bladder dysfunctions.

### Who Shouldn't Use Botox?

While the Botox cosmetic is safe for general use and can be used to address a variety of disorders, some people may be put at risk by taking Botox injections.

#### 1) Pregnant or Breastfeeding Women

Because of ethical considerations, few studies have been done on the effects of Botox on pregnant women, due to health risks for the unborn child. Although there are no conclusive answers against its use, experts are firm to uphold a general rule: Avoid medical interventions during pregnancy if the life of the mother or the unborn child are not at risk.

Since Botox is a small dose of a toxin, doctors are especially against injecting pregnant and breastfeeding women with it. Much like how pregnant women are advised to avoid smoking and

drinking during pregnancy, cosmetic injections such as Botox are also discouraged. In fact, animal studies performed on mice resulted in some fetal abnormalities. This is why a clinical trial cannot be done for actual people.

The best time to get a Botox cosmetic treatment after pregnancy is once the breastfeeding stops, and when the pregnancy hormones have settled down. The good news for expectant mothers is that pregnancy naturally lends a glow to the skin, so there's not much need to take additional measures for it.

## 2) People With Neuromuscular Disorders

People with neuromuscular disorders like ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease), Lambert-Eaton syndrome or myasthenia gravis should avoid using Botox for cosmetic reasons as well.

Doctors and specialists are wary of injecting patients who have pre-existing muscle weakness with Botox, since the drug may aggravate their condition. Patients who were exposed to low doses of the substance have reported experiencing severe respiratory issues such as difficulty breathing, and dysphagia or difficulty swallowing. People with breathing conditions such as asthma or emphysema are also cautioned against using Botox for similar reasons.

## 3) People Who are Allergic to Botox

Allergic reactions to the Botox cosmetic are extremely rare, but they are not unheard of. Patients who found themselves to be hypersensitive to the drug reacted with hives, itching, wheezing, swelling in the face, lips, tongue, or throat, and feeling faint. While there are no allergy tests for it, it's best to call your doctor prior to taking Botox injections.

Aside from allergic reactions, Botox may also trigger side effects and complications like:

Pain, swelling, or bruising at the injection site

Headache or flu-like symptoms

Droopy eyelids

Crooked smiles

Drooling

Eye dryness or excessive tearing

Upset stomach

Numbness

Malaise

## Alternatives to Botox

Botox may be safe to use, but it's not always for everyone. Some people have conditions or allergies that prevent them from getting the Botox cosmetic, while others may find it difficult to pay hundreds of dollars to erase their wrinkles. Others would also opt for a more natural treatment to steer clear of side effects.

Thankfully, there are a number of acceptable alternatives to Botox that patients can consider. These include: acupuncture, chemical peels, and laser treatment:

Acupuncture: With the use of fine needles, a doctor can harness the blood circulation and oxygen supply to repair the skin and encourage the production of stronger collagen and elastic fibres. This reduces the fine lines in the skin and produces a healthier overall complexion.

Chemical peels: Chemical peels are better known as a treatment for acne, but it's also effective in reducing signs of aging in skin. By applying chemical solutions to the skin (glycolic acid being the most popular), the skin will blister and peel off, leaving a younger and brighter appearance.

Laser treatments: Compared to Botox, laser treatments are quicker and less painful. By tracing a pixelated pattern on the skin, the laser creates microscopic wounds that stimulate collagen production in the skin.

#### Consult With Ethos Spa

Before trying out Botox, make sure it's the right treatment for you. Call your doctor or book a free consultation with us at Ethos Spa. Our team of board certified cosmetic medicine doctors provide personalized aesthetic treatments for all our clients, and our state of the art services ensure long-lasting and beautiful results.