

Can Botox Fix Nasolabial Folds?

Nasolabial folds, also known as “smile lines” or “laugh lines”, are facial lines that indent themselves on either side of the mouth and deepen with age. While they are a normal part of the body and are an inevitable sign of ageing, these folds also tend to sag and weigh the face over time.

When left untreated, nasolabial folds can make you look older than you are, which could negatively impact your self-confidence. Thankfully, treatments like Botox exist to turn back the clock and improve the appearance of nasolabial folds.

So can Botox help ease these folds back into their place? Yes, it can. By combining it with a filler, an expert doctor can soften the muscles at the corners of the mouth and fill in the folds. Cosmetic procedures like this are common, and are effective in accomplishing the desired results.

What Are Nasolabial Folds?

Nasolabial folds are frequently called laugh lines or smile lines, since the folds become more prominent when you laugh or smile. They all refer to the skin folds that run from either side of the nose to the corners of the mouth and separate the cheeks from the upper lip.

These folds are made up of bundles of fibrous tissues and muscles, so when the skin loses elasticity with age, the folds deepen. As nasolabial folds develop, other lines may appear on the face as well, such as “marionette lines”. Marionette lines are the pair of lines that may appear from the corners of the mouth and extend to the chin.

Why Do We Develop Them?

Nasolabial folds naturally develop as part of human anatomy, and they are not a sign of any underlying medical conditions. However, these folds become more prominent in old age.

One reason nasolabial folds appear is genetics. If your parents or grandparents have deep wrinkles, you are likely to develop wrinkles and deep folds as well. Repeated facial expressions also cause these folds to emerge.

More commonly, nasolabial folds occur due to excessive weight gain or weight loss. Excess in cheek fat combined with the thinning of the epidermis causes the tissues and fat surrounding your smile to sag. The age-related loss of volume in the face will also create nasolabial folds.

As people age, their bodies decline in the production of elastin and collagen, which causes sagging. Elastin makes skin elastic. It is the protein in your skin that allows the tissues inside the body to revert to their original shape after stretching or contracting. Another protein, collagen, provides the skin its structure. As the most abundant protein present in the body, collagen is responsible for holding the body together. It is the major building block for bones, skin, muscles, tendons, ligaments, and hair.

The natural loss of both proteins leads to the loss of tightness and firmness in the skin. Lifestyle factors such as frequent exposure to sun, smoking, and lack of sleep also contribute to the body's elastin and collagen loss.

How Botox Can Help With Nasolabial Folds

While nasolabial folds are not a risk factor for any health condition, they make the face look much older than they appear. Nasolabial folds may be treated by a doctor through cosmetic procedures and plastic surgery.

Botox is produced by combining a substance called botulinum toxin with saline. It can prevent the nerves from releasing acetylcholine (the neurotransmitter that controls muscle contraction) and temporarily paralyze human muscles. When it is injected in the face, a plastic surgeon can relax the muscles, which may be pulling the mouth down while the face is at rest.

How It Works: Professional Recommendations and Results

An experienced plastic surgeon can effectively keep the nasolabial fold from appearing too deep by injecting in the right areas between the nose and the mouth. Between the ages of 40 - 50, a doctor may prescribe Botox to relax the muscles surrounding the mouth to slow down sagging, but this is usually combined with a dermal filler. These fillers are made of a soft tissue, injected beneath to skin to restore lost volume and fill in the folds.

The reason for combining Botox with a dermal filler is that its effects are not permanent. The results last only for an average of 3-4 months, and patients would need several rounds of injections to achieve consistent results. Another reason is that Botox only encourages the muscles from pulling downwards. Fillers are needed to replace the volume in deeper lines and achieve the desired results.

Patients aged 60 years and older are advised by plastic surgeons to eliminate nasolabial folds by using a combination of Botox, facelifts, and laser therapy. A doctor may also let younger patients undergo plastic surgery as a precaution before developing nasolabial folds, but they should be accompanied by healthy lifestyle choices such as:

Protecting the skin from being damaged by the sun

Maintaining a healthy weight

Going on an antioxidant-rich diet

Quitting smoking, which weakens elastin and collagen

Treating Dynamic Wrinkles

Botox can treat most dynamic wrinkles, which are caused by muscle movement and facial expressions. Horizontal lines across the forehead, crow's feet around the eyes, and the "11" between the eyebrows are among the wrinkles that form when you smile, laugh, frown or squint. Botox is highly effective in smoothing these lines and wrinkles out.

Aside from being a cosmetic procedure, Botox is also used for conditions such as eye twitching, eyelid spasms, chronic migraines, bladder dysfunctions, muscle contractures and excessive sweating (or hyperhidrosis).

Regain Youthful Skin At Ethos Spa

Wrinkles, crow's feet, marionette lines and nasolabial folds naturally develop over time, but that doesn't mean you have to look prematurely aged. At Ethos Spa, we offer world-class aesthetic treatments that will help you regain youthful-looking skin and keep signs of aging from becoming too prominent.

Our board-certified plastic surgeons also offer top-quality services in skin tightening, body contouring, and laser treatments. To learn more about Botox, dermal fillers, and other types of cosmetic surgery, book a free consultation with us today.