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BEAUTY

limiting the muscle movement in the upper lip). It can also "lift" the tip of the nose by relaxing the muscle that pulls it down.

Q/ How do I find a good doctor?

Stick to a board-certified dermatologist or plastic surgeon, pros who have way more than basic training, says Dr. Nazarian. The American Board of Medical Specialties' database (CertificationMatters.org) lets you see if your doc makes the cut. "Also, seek recommendations from family and friends," says Heidi Waldorf, MD, a New York City dermatologist (RealSelf.com, the Yelp of cosmetic surgery, is another resource.) And get a good look at your doc's and the staff's faces; they're likely using it.

Q/ What about my dentist? He offers Botox now.

Not the best idea, says Aaron Kosins, MD, a plastic surgeon in Newport Beach, California. Some can start injecting Botox after a quickie one-day course. In contrast, a board-certified dermatologist or plastic surgeon has undergone at least four or six years of training, respectively, in his or her field.

Q/ Are Botox parties or Groupon deals safe?

Cut-rate Botox can be a red flag for ignorant—or worse, unethical—practices, warns Dr. Waldorf, who says that most medical societies frown upon these tactics. "There have been reports of counterfeit Botox being sold through unauthorized providers, often from outside

the country," says Dr. Nazarian. "Unfortunately, some injectors see the cheap price and jump on it. Or they'll use real Botox but over-dilute it with saline to create more profit per bottle."

Q/ What are Botox's risks?

One potential side effect is a droopy eyelid, says Meghan O'Brien, MD, a New York City dermatologist. This can happen if the Botox spreads or your doc injects too close to the muscle that raises the lid. "Experienced doctors will know which area to avoid," she says. (FYI: The issue can be treated temporarily with prescription eye drops and should resolve itself within several weeks.) Overinjecting or injecting too low on the forehead can also cause brows to droop and create a heavy look. That can't be erased—you'll have to wait until the Botox wears off.

Q/ When will it wear off?

Generally, it lasts three to four months, but it can stick around longer, especially if you've had a high dose, says Dr. O'Brien.



How much does it cost?

If your forehead is starting to resemble a sheet of loose leaf, expect to spend about \$400 per area (\$382 is the national average). The space between the brows is considered another area, as are crow's feet.

Q/ Why do some people look crazy from Botox?

That wild-eyed, frozen *Housewives* look isn't the norm. That usually happens when someone gets too much overall—by request (scary but true) or by accident. Another culprit: "Her doctor may have injected her solely into the center of her forehead—not the sides—causing the muscles to lift the outer part of the brows," says Joshua Zeichner, MD, director of cosmetic and clinical research at Mount Sinai Hospital in NYC.

Q/ Does it hurt?

If you've ever had a bikini wax, consider Botox a spa day. Many docs compare it to a series of sharp, brief pinches—and you can get numbing cream.

Q/ Is Botox the same stuff that women get in their lips?

No. Adding volume requires filler, usually one with hyaluronic acid. Juvéderm Vollbella XC, recently FDA-approved, plumps lips as well as surrounding fine lines. ■

Q/ But my friend told me hers was just \$10 per unit!

Some docs don't charge per area but instead by unit. A vial of Botox contains 50 or 100 units, and it takes about 40 to 60 to smooth a 30something's forehead, says Howard Sobel, MD, a Manhattan dermatologist. A consultation, including an estimate, is key.

Q/ Does it work instantly?

No, it usually takes about three days to kick in, says Dr. O'Brien.