



Lowe Plastic Surgery (LPS)

Dr. Lowe's Facts about Injectables (Botulinum Toxin & Soft Tissue Fillers)

How do I get started with Injectables?

It is important prior to any cosmetic procedure for patients to spend some time educating themselves about the pros and cons of treatment. Although patients who undergo Botulinum Toxin and /or temporary soft tissue fillers are typically happy, this elective procedure is not for everybody. The main risk of injectable application is pain, bleeding, swelling, and under-correction, over-correction, and diffusion. Read the educational materials provided and on our website including consent forms prior to your procedure. Make sure that your physician is Board Certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery or the American Board of Dermatology. Please check out websites and links at: www.drjlowe.com

FAQ's about Botulinum Toxin

How does Botulinum Toxin work?

Clostridia botulina bacteria produce a class of chemical compounds known as "toxins". The Botulinum Toxin is processed and purified to produce a sterile product suitable for specific therapeutic uses. Once the diluted toxin is injected, it produces a temporary paralysis of muscle by preventing transmission of nerve impulses. Since 2002, Botulinum Toxin has been FDA-approved for cosmetic treatment of forehead wrinkles caused by specific muscle groups. Other areas of the face and body may be treated "off-label." Botulinum toxin has also been used to treat migraines, colorectal disorders, excessive perspiration, and musculoskeletal disorders. Injections are customized for patients, depending on clinical need. Botulinum toxin cannot stop the process of aging. It can however, temporarily diminish the look of wrinkles caused by muscles. Injections may be performed as a singular procedure or as an adjunct to others.

Is there any difference in the different Toxin products on the market?

There are a number of Botulinum Toxins on the market. These products include but are not limited to BOTOX[®] (*Botulina* Toxin Type A, Allergan), XEOMIN[®] (IncobotulinumtoxinA, Merz), and DYSPORT[®] (*AbobotulinumtoxinA*, Medicis[®] Aesthetic Inc.). Each of these products when properly dosed and applied appears to be inter-changeable and equivalent regardless what each company may claim or advertise. If you have a preference on the name brand please let our physician and staff know. It is important to note, that the product you select may result in change in your per unit cost. Current medical research strongly supports the fact that the products used in this practice are equally effective regardless of the manufacture.

Am I a candidate for Botulinum Toxin?

Patients with localized facial wrinkles related to movement in the forehead, eyelid, and mouth region are usually the best candidates for Botulinum Toxin applications. It can be an excellent addition to any cosmetic procedure. Patients considering Botulinum Toxin need to decide if the risks are worth it or not? Botulinum Toxin last about 3 months and patients require re-treatment 4 times a year for consistent results. Botulinum Toxin is best suited for patients who are seeking a subtle non-permanent improvement in fine facial wrinkles related to muscle movement. Typical areas that Botulinum Toxin is injected include the forehead, cheeks, lips, and neck. Once the Botulinum Toxin is applied the full results take about one week, last several months, and then fade by 4 months. It is best for patients to avoid massaging injection sites for the first week. A frank discussion with a board certified plastic surgeon or dermatologist will help patients make the right decision about this procedure.

Is Botulinum Toxin covered by health insurance?

Botulinum Toxin used in our practice is by definition a cosmetic procedure. It is not covered by insurance when performed in our practice no matter the clinical indications. Some patients have problems with chronic migraines but a neurologist will need to inject Botulinum Toxin in those situations and submit the procedure to your insurance. Many patients undergoing Botulinum Toxin injections report that their chronic migraines are improved but that is only a secondary benefit in our practice. Botulinum Toxin is also utilized to treat excessive sweating and when applied in our practice it is cosmetic. Botulinum Toxin

can be used to improve facial asymmetry related to trauma or paralysis, but it would still require a cosmetic payment. Patients who are interested in Botulinum Toxin being covered by their insurance should go to a specialist recommended by their insurance that agrees to submit in that clinical situation. Many patients undergoing potentially medically covered procedures choose to pay for Botulinum Toxin with our experienced physicians to enhance the cosmetic outcome. Dr. Lowe will discuss these issues during the course of your cosmetic consultation and consent process.

Is Botulinum Toxin application painful?

There are a number of different ways to perform Botulinum Toxin. Most physicians performing Botulinum Toxin injection prefer patients to apply a topical numbing cream about an hour prior to application. The topical numbing cream or EMLA ensures some patient comfort. Isolated areas of injection may be performed without a topical block in most cases. In our practice Botulinum Toxin is applied with very small needles which are well tolerated during a quick application. The price of Botulinum Toxin is based primarily on the volume of product given and at times on the time and complexity of the procedure. Patients requiring less work and time are rewarded by a smaller fee. Patients rarely complain of significant pain following injection regardless of the location. A consultation with a board certified plastic surgeon or dermatologist, allows patients to determine the technique best suited for them.

What is the best place to get Botulinum Toxin?

There are a variety of products available to treat aging face or wrinkles. Most products are chosen based on the physician's expertise and experience. Botulinum Toxin treats forehead wrinkles and crow's feet quite well. It is usually best to undergo a conservative Botulinum Toxin application in the beginning. Later patients can venture out to explore the less obvious locations that might make them look younger or less harsh or mad. Wrinkles that are static are less likely to respond to Botulinum Toxin application. These wrinkles occur in older patients and are typically related to skin excess and soft tissue sagging. Deeper wrinkles may respond to soft tissue fillers that include: Juvederm, Radiesse, and human fat. Some patients may find that laser treatments or surgical procedures more effectively address their concerns. Whatever the clinical situation, almost all patients benefit for Botulinum Toxin. They also usually benefit from a medical skin regimen to decrease the signs of aging over time.

Is Botulinum Toxin all a big SCAM?

All cosmetic products have failed to be completely effective or predictable to date. Every year a technology or marketing tool is introduced, and every year many products are disproven. The problem with certain products is they sound good but are very expensive, and patients fail to see real results. If it sounds too good to be true, it is too good to be true. There are many products that hold promise now and in the future. It is hard enough to get consistent, lasting, and satisfactory results even with scientifically proven products. The best products depend on the patient's anatomy, preference, and willingness to compromise. We have been performing Botulinum Toxin for over 15 years and have found very few products to be as predictable and satisfying. Many patients combine injections with other procedures such as soft tissue fillers, laser resurfacing, intense pulse light (IPL), and surgery. A consultation with a board certified plastic surgeon or dermatologist can help patients choose the best option.

Do you think I will like Botulinum Toxin?

Botulinum toxin is a great way to treat patients who want cosmetic improvement to specific areas of the face and who are not considering surgery. If a patient undergoes Botulinum Toxin application which is temporary, it will go away over time and modifications can be made to the technique. In our practice, Dr. Lowe can usually determine the best application for each patient with feedback within 2-3 applications. We keep detailed records with injection maps so patients can achieve results that best fit their preferences and expectations. Patients who would like a more permanent result can undergo surgical procedures that can provide lasting results similar to Botulinum toxin. In many cases, the biggest risk of Botulinum Toxin application is that patients really like it and want to continue treatments forever. Botulinum Toxin is not popular by chance it really works in specific areas in patients ranging from 25-65 and more. Patients should talk to a board certified plastic surgeon or dermatologist to help determine what to expect before and after Botulinum Toxin application.

Will other people know I had Botulinum Toxin?

The results of Botulinum Toxin are usually subtle. Patients can look overdone without expression if the amount of Botulinum Toxin is particularly high. Dr. Lowe always tries to achieve a subtle improvement of youth with the smallest number of units. Botox is injected using extremely small needle with multiple injection sites. The injection sites are very small but bruising can occur. It is usually better to start small at your first treatment to make sure you like the results. The effects of Botulinum Toxin can be seen due to surgeon error, complications, bruising, or patient medication (i.e. Aspirin or Ibuprofen). The best way to avoid evidence of injection is to follow post-operative instructions, apply gentle pressure, and ice when possible. Patients require 3-4 treatments a year to see ideal results. Only a limited amount of Botox can be applied safely to any one area at a time. Patients should have a frank discussion with their plastic surgeon or dermatologist to help them make the right decision about their treatment regimen.

Does the effect of Botulinum Toxin last forever?

Sorry, it does not last forever. However, in patients who continue Botulinum Toxin applications, wrinkle prevention and a more youthful long term appearance is a reasonable expectation. The results of Botulinum Toxin are definitely temporary. Nevertheless, continued paralysis of muscle movement provides patients with biofeedback that actually teaches patients to avoid negative behavior. If a patient likes Botulinum Toxin in the forehead or eyelid region a brow lift or eyelid tuck may actually save money over time. In most cases, Botulinum Toxin is the best option for patients seeking a short term solution without surgery, risk, or substantial cost. It is noteworthy that Botulinum Toxin and other paralyzing agents on the market today provide a highly effective and predictable short term cosmetic result. Botulinum Toxin is by far the best and most reliable injectable agent on the market today, and significant improvements in these products are expected over the next decade.

Does Botulinum Toxin cost a lot?

The cost of Botulinum Toxin applications is based primarily on the amount of product injected. Patients are always encouraged to combine Botulinum Toxin with other nonsurgical or surgical procedures. The total cost of procedures is usually decreased when they are combined. Great results sometimes require multiple treatments or maintenance. Many patients will space injections out over time to fit into their schedule and budget. Future treatments are often less time consuming and can be performed with less anesthetic as patients become more familiar with the process. Patients can usually tell within a week if Botulinum Toxin is right for them. Most patients are very happy with the results.

Where and when should I have Botulinum Toxin?

An important decision for patients considering Botulinum Toxin is where and when. Botulinum Toxin is usually performed in our clinic with topical anesthetic. Some patients request sedation with medication by mouth but then will require a ride home. These procedures usually take 5 minutes to perform and patients are asked to ice for 5-10 minutes after application in most cases. Patients often will bruise or swell for 1-2 days after the procedure. Dr. Lowe performs injections himself and he gets Botulinum Toxin every 4-6 months to improve his wrinkles. Patients who want Botulinum Toxin on the same day as their first consultation are encouraged to review the consent forms prior to the consultation. If you have had it before and like it, just let Dr. Lowe know the amount and location when possible to ensure the best results.

What are the restrictions after Botulinum Toxin application?

The recovery from Botulinum Toxin is usually predictable and limited. Patients are asked to limit activity for 1-2 hours and ice the area for 5-10 minutes. Patients should avoid aspirin or NSAIDS (i.e. Advil, Ibuprofen, Aleve, etc.) for 5-7 days prior to application to decrease the risk of bruising. Patients will not see the full results of Botulinum Toxin for 7-10 days. Patients often report swelling, bruising, heaviness, and minor pain for 2-5 days after treatment.

FAQ's about Temporary Soft Tissue Fillers

Am I a candidate for soft tissue fillers?

Patients with localized soft tissue defects, minimal weight changes, little tissue redundancy, or areas of deflation or contour irregularities are usually the best candidates for soft tissue fillers. However, fillers can be an excellent addition to any cosmetic procedure. Patients considering fillers need to decide if the risks are worth it or not? Soft tissue fillers require 1-2 treatments yearly for reliable results in most cases. In fact fillers are best suited for patients who are seeking a subtle non-permanent improvement in skin contour. Typical areas that filler is injected include the face, cheeks, lips, forehead, and scars. The filler is taken off the self and require no harvesting. Once the filler is applied the results often improve over the first several months and then fade by 6-8 months. It is best for patients to avoid massaging stiff areas for the first week. Dr. Lowe often combines soft tissue fillers with a number of cosmetic procedures to ensure the best results. A frank discussion with a board certified plastic surgeon will help patients make the right decision about this procedure.

Are soft tissue fillers covered by health insurance?

Soft tissue fillers are by definition cosmetic procedures. It is not covered by insurance as a stand-alone procedure. Some patients have contour irregularities following reconstruction that may be treated with other techniques such as fat transfer but this is included in revision medical coding. Dr. Lowe will often use fat grafting during breast reconstruction, scar revisions, or flap reconstruction and it is not considered cosmetic in these situations. Many patients undergoing medically covered procedures choose to pay for soft tissue fillers to enhance the cosmetic outcome. Dr. Lowe will discuss these issues during the course of the consultation and consent process.

What is the difference between soft tissue fillers with or without local anesthesia?

There are a number of different ways to perform soft tissue fillers. Most plastic surgeons performing soft tissue injection prefer patients to be under local anesthesia to ensure patient comfort and safety. Isolated areas of injection may be performed without a local block. Local procedures require preparation and local injection that can be well managed in certain areas. In our practice soft tissue fillers are priced based on time and complexity. Patients requiring less work and time are rewarded by a smaller fee. Patients rarely complain of significant pain following soft tissue fillers regardless of the technique. A consultation with a board certified plastic surgeon, allows patients to determine the technique best suited for them.

What is the best soft tissue filler?

There are a variety of products available to treat soft tissue defects or wrinkles. Most products are chosen based on the physician's expertise and experience. The most popular soft tissue fillers include: Juvederm, Restylane, Radiesse, and human fat. All products have failed to be completely effective or predictable to date. Every year a technology or marketing tool is introduced and every year many products are disproven. The problem with certain products is they sound good but are very expensive, and patients often fail to see better results. If it sounds too good to be true, it is too good to be true. We have been performing soft tissue fillers for over 15 years and have found many products to be quite predictable in most cases. There are many technologies and fillers that hold promise now and in the future. It is hard enough to get consistent, lasting, and satisfactory results even with scientifically proven products. The best products depend on the patient's anatomy, preference, and willingness to compromise. Many patients combine soft tissue fillers with other procedures such as Botox, Laser resurfacing, Intense Pulse Light, and surgery. A consultation with a board certified plastic surgeon can help patients choose the best option.

Is there a way to predict the results of soft tissue fillers?

Temporary fillers (i.e. Juvederm, Restylane, and Radiesse) are a good way to treat patients who are not considering surgery. If a patient is satisfied with the application of temporary filler but would like a more permanent result, fat grafting is often the best long term option. In many cases, fat grafting can address defects that are too large for a temporary filler to handle. Patients should talk to a board certified plastic surgeon to help determine what to expect before and after fat transfer.

Will other people know I had soft tissue filler?

The results of soft tissue fillers are usually subtle with the first several applications. Patients do tend to look overdone if the treatments are repeated too many times. Dr. Lowe always tries to achieve a subtle improvement of youth. All fillers are injected using a small needle with multiple injection sites. The injection sites are very small, placed in natural skin creases, and are the size of a needle stick. It is usually better to start small at your first treatment to ensure you like the results and you do not experience complications. Small contour irregularities can be seen due to surgeon error, complications, bruising, or patient genetics (some patients react to fillers). The best way to avoid evidence of soft tissue filler is to follow post-operative instructions on message and wound care. Patients require yearly treatments in most cases to see ideal results. Only a limited amount of filler can be applied safely to any one area at a time. Patients should have a frank discussion with their plastic surgeon to help them make the right decision about their treatment regimen.

Does the effect of soft tissue fillers last forever?

The results of soft tissue off the shelf fillers are temporary. Some soft tissue fillers last 6-8 months and others last for more than a year. If a patient likes temporary soft tissue fillers they can consider a more permanent option of fat transfer surgery. In most cases, temporary soft tissue fillers are the best option for patients seeking a short term solution without surgery, risk, or substantial cost. It is noteworthy that soft fillers on the market today provide an effective and predictable short term result. The fillers are either light like jelly or thick like jam. The lighter products are more subtle, softer, and last a shorter period. The thicker products are better for deeper wrinkles and last longer, and may be result in more stiffness or palpability.

Do temporary soft tissue fillers cost a lot?

The cost of temporary soft tissue applications is based primarily on the amount of product injected. Patients are always encouraged to combine soft tissue fillers with other nonsurgical or surgical procedures. By combining procedures there is a decrease in cost. Great results sometimes require multiple treatments or maintenance. Many patients will space soft tissue fillers out over time to fit into their schedule and budget. Future treatments are often less time consuming and can be performed with less anesthetic. Patients can usually tell right away if soft tissue fillers are right for them: and most patients a happy with the results.

Where and when should I have soft tissue fillers?

An important decision for patients considering soft tissue fillers is where and when. Soft tissue fillers are usually performed in our clinic with local anesthetic. Some patients request sedation with a medication by mouth and require a ride home with an adult. These procedures usually take 30 minutes to perform and patients remain numb for 1-2 hours. Most patients will be noticeable bruised or swollen for 2-3 days after the procedure. Dr. Lowe performs the numbing and soft tissue filler himself. Patients who want soft tissue filler on the same day as the consultation are encouraged to review the consent forms prior to the consultation.

What are the restrictions after filler application?

The recovery from soft tissue fillers is usually predictable. Patients are asked to limit activity for 24 hours and ice the area for 20-30 minutes. Patients should avoid aspirin or NSAIDS (i.e. Advil, Ibuprofen, Aleve, etc.) for 5-7 days prior to application to decrease the risk of bruising. Patients will not be able to see the true results of soft tissue filler for 1-2 weeks. Patients report swelling, numbness, contour irregularities, and minor pain for 3-7 days after treatment.

Should I wait and think about my Injectable options?

Injectables such as Botulinum Toxin and Soft tissue fillers are a lifestyle decisions. Although injection carries limited risks, the visible benefits can be subtle. Patients undergoing treatment are able to see instant results. Patient should choose a board certified plastic surgeon or dermatologist that they trust, takes time, reviews risks, and puts safety first. One of the most important aspects of these procedures is complete cosmetic skin care and follow-up. The biggest complaint from patients is that they did not get

enough of the product. If a patient wants more Botulinum Toxin or filler and it is indicated, patients should simply get and pay for more product. It is best for patients to follow standard dosing based on the physicians experience at your first application to ensure the best outcome at the best price. Injectables are extremely popular because they really work. These products are often the right thing for the right person.

What about patient safety and Injectables?

There are a variety of safety concerns related to Injectables. Many of the concerns are related to risk of adverse reactions to injection or the products themselves. However, in most cases the safety of Injectables is most dependent on the individual doing the injection. These injections are elective procedures reserved for patients in good health in clinic setting. Drs. Jim Lowe and Julie Lowe are physician specialists, who perform real procedures, in a real medical clinic. As a member of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) or the American Academy of Dermatology both doctors are required to follow guidelines designed to ensure the best patient safety and outcomes. You can also always be assured in our practice that you will get fresh and uncontaminated product at the agreed upon dose in the appropriate location. For further information about safety and credentials go to: www.drjlowe.com

What are Dr. Lowe's take home points about Injectables?

1. Understand risks (bruising, swelling, asymmetry, and pain) and review the consent form.
2. The results from injection are quick, but bruising and swelling usually lasts for several days.
3. Topical numbing medication and small needles are key to comfort and success
4. You get what you pay for. If you want more injectable and it is indicated get more.
5. Botulinum Toxin last about 3-4 months. It is best to be conservative at the first applications.
6. Most fillers last for 6 months to 1 year. It is difficult to over-correct with one application.
7. Patients who like Injectables are often candidates for lasers and medically prescribed skin care.
8. Fat transfer can offer a permanent filler solution but usually requires surgery and significant recovery.
9. Have fun with Injectables. Consider trying new or different applications over time.
10. Physician certification and safety matters. No one wants a bad outcome from a minor procedure.