



Botox (*Botulinum toxin*)

Botox has become a well-known name, but what exactly is it, and why has it gained such popularity?

Botox is a brand name for botulinum toxin, a neurotoxin produced by the bacterium *Clostridium botulinum*. This powerful substance comes in several injectable forms, including Botox, Xeomin, Nuceiva, and Dysport—all of which are available at the Integrative Naturopathic Medical Centre. Botox has revolutionized both cosmetic and medical treatments due to its versatility and effectiveness. Whether you're considering it for aesthetic enhancements or medical relief, understanding its benefits and limitations is key to making an informed decision. It's important to consult with a healthcare professional to determine if Botox is the right option for you.

While it's known for its cosmetic uses, it was originally developed to treat muscle spasms and other medical conditions, and discovered by our very own Vancouver based, Dr. Joan Caruthers. The toxin works by blocking nerve signals to muscles, causing temporary immobilization of the target muscle. When used in small, controlled doses, this effect is advantageous to appearances as it can smooth out wrinkles by reducing the muscle contraction, which pulls on the skin. It can also be very useful in pain management and facial slimming by reducing muscle contraction strength.

BENEFITS

COSMETIC USES

- Forehead Lines: Smooths out horizontal lines across the forehead.
- Eyebrows: Lifts the eyebrows and make the eyes appear more open.
- Crow's Feet: Reduces lines around the eyes.
- Frown Lines: Eases the vertical lines between the eyebrows.
- Lower Face: Prevents frowning, slow the development of marionette lines and stop the chin from developing an orange peel texture.
- Lips: Gently flips the lip and smooths out smokers' lines on the top lip.
- Nose: Slims the nose and modestly lift the angle of the nose.

- Bunny Lines: Reduces lines that form around the sides of the nose.
- Gummy Smile: Minimizes gum exposure with smile.
- Neck Tightening: Prevents splitting of the platysma and development of "turkey neck".
- Facial Sliming: By injecting the masseters, it can slim the face

These treatments are popular because they offer a minimally invasive alternative to more invasive procedures like facelifts. Results typically last between three to six months, depending on the individual and the area treated. Many individuals still opt to have Botox to manage upper face lines and prevent further aged appearance even after they've had a facelift.

MEDICAL USES

- Chronic Migraines: Reduces the frequency and severity of migraine headaches.
- Excessive Sweating (Hyperhidrosis): Helps control severe underarm sweating and hands.
- TMJ: Helps relieve jaw pain and temple pain.
- Muscle Spasms: Treats conditions such as cervical dystonia (neck muscle spasms), torticollis, and tension in the trapezius muscles.
- Pelvic Floor Dysfunction: Relaxation of the muscles of the pelvic floor that lead to vaginismus, and chronic pain. (We do not currently offer this service at Integrative, but our practitioners can provide information on where you may be able to obtain this if other management methods have failed.)
- Bladder Overactivity: This treatment is only offered by urologists.
- Blepharospasm: (eye twitching - We do not currently offer this service at Integrative).



WHAT TO EXPECT

Your first visit is the opportunity for you to share your health or cosmetic goals that can help your practitioner in recommending specific non-surgical aesthetic therapies. Your practitioner will complete a focused physical exam, depending on the area(s) of concern. This may include analysis of facial symmetry, skin texture, facial muscle tone and movement pattern, and scalp and hair growth pattern, if applicable. If your practitioner believes you are a good candidate, they will review their recommendations, including potential benefits, side effects, and recovery time. **Your first visit may include your initial treatment.**

Getting Botox is a quick procedure and typically takes less than 30 minutes. The process involves a few tiny injections into the targeted muscles. While some discomfort might occur, it's generally mild and brief. Patients can typically resume their daily activities almost immediately, though it's advised to avoid strenuous exercise, sauna, swimming or exfoliating that day.

Aftercare

For up to two weeks after (or until the neurotoxin has become fully effective), patients should avoid: lying face down for long periods, massaging the area that was treated, or any other aesthetic interventions such as microneedling, laser, radiofrequency etc.

At Integrative, nonsurgical aesthetic techniques are rarely provided alone. Your practitioner may recommend additional treatments or services to enhance the effects of injectables, microneedling, or cosmetic acupuncture such as naturopathic medicine, holistic nutrition, intravenous therapies or physician-grade skin or health products, if desired,

Treatment Course and Anticipated Effects

The effects of Botox generally last anywhere from three to four months. Scheduling follow-up Botox injections helps to maintain the intended look when creating an efficient treatment plan. **Consistent, regular treatments can produce ever-improving results.** Maintaining the desired look with Botox requires a carefully planned follow-up schedule for injections. Regular visits can lead to steadily improved and lasting effects. By discussing your post-treatment options with your healthcare practitioner, you can ensure optimal results and make the most of your Botox treatment plan.

Safety

Botox is considered safe, but complications do rarely occur. Most common side effects include bruising or redness at the injection site. Occasionally headaches are experienced after the procedure. Heaviness in the forehead and uneven muscle inhibition can occur occasionally. In rare cases the toxin can spread to unintended areas which can cause negative effects such as drooping of the eyelids. If this occurs, you should contact your Naturopathic Doctor immediately.

Serious complications are rare but can include symptoms such as:

- pain/bruising at the injection site
- headache, face pain, eye swelling
- skin rash/allergic reaction
- local muscle weakness/paralysis of the face
- irregular heartbeat/chest pain
- malaise (feeling generally unwell)

To avoid unwanted treatment outcomes, it is of the utmost important the pre and post instructions are followed. It is important for patients to follow up with their Naturopathic Doctor within two weeks of their treatment to ensure optimal results. To ensure safety and effectiveness, it's crucial to choose a qualified provider. Look for a board-certified Naturopathic Doctor, Medical Doctor, Nurse or Nurse Practitioner with experience in administering Botox.

Cost

Initial Aesthetic Consultations are \$50.00, should you receive treatment the same day we use the \$50.00 towards your treatment. We currently offer Botox at \$10.00 per unit. This does not include other aesthetic therapies or treatment. Price is subject to change, inquire with reception for most up to date pricing information.