

Is It Time for Botox?

Men as young as 25 are getting wrinkle-plumping shots—and with good reason.

ANDREW, A DOT-COM ENTREPRENEUR WHO SPLITS HIS TIME BETWEEN NEW YORK AND Dallas, was sick of hearing that he looked worn out. "People would ask, 'Are you tired? Are you stressed?'" he says. "And I wasn't. I was just back from the Caribbean and really happy." ¶ So he decided to do something about it. Last February, he had Botox injected into the creases between his eyebrows and the bags underneath his eyes. ¶ Andrew (who asked to be iden-

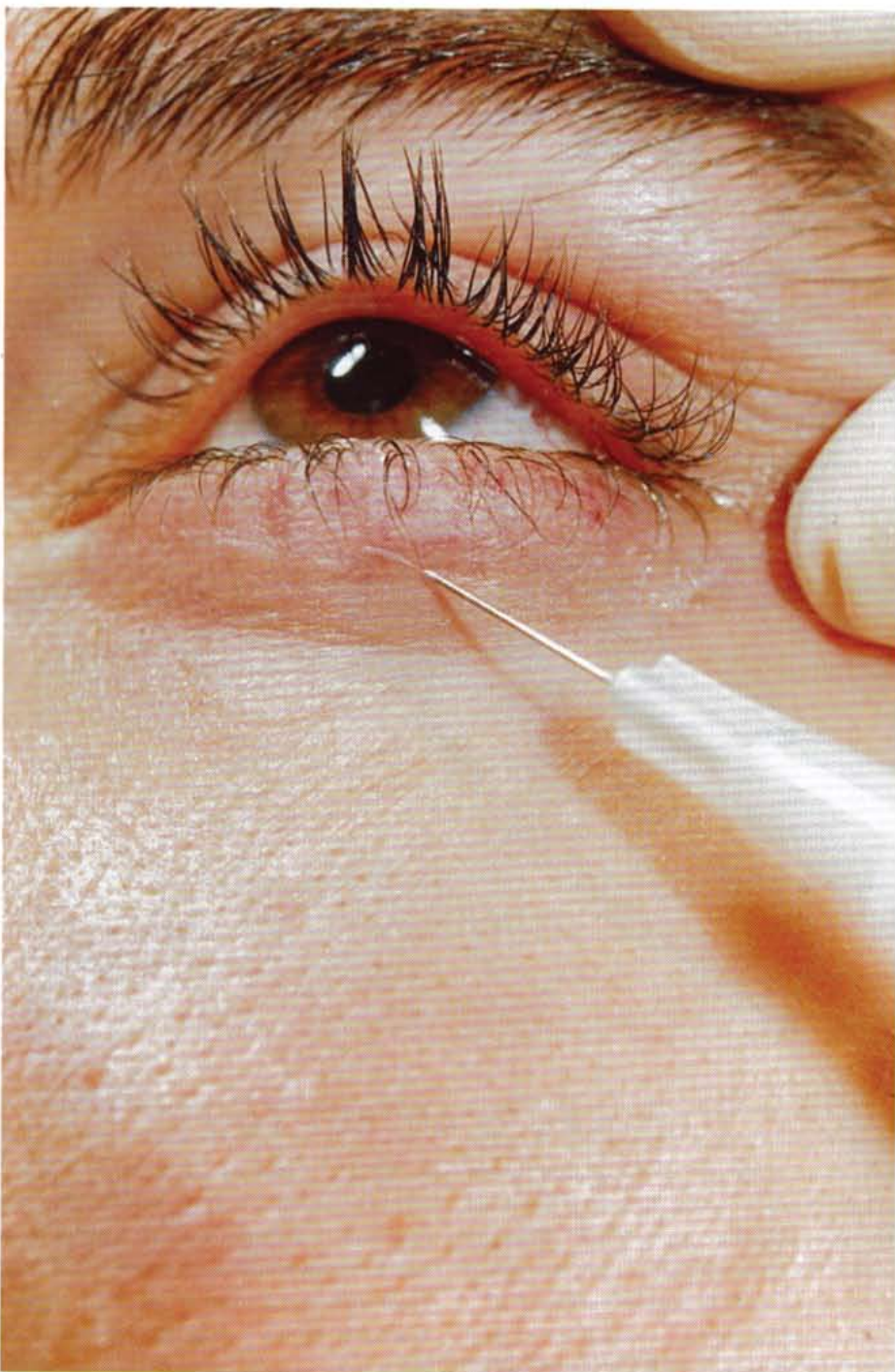
tified only by his middle name) is 25 years old. When the doctor who administered his shots offered him pig-shaped foam balls to squeeze if it hurt, he gladly accepted.

"Everyone is sort of noticing [that men are getting Botox at a younger age]," says Dr. Kenneth Beer, a dermatologist in Palm Beach who administers Botox. "The number of men getting treated is going up, and the age they're being treated at is going down."

The Y-chromosomed had more than 313,500 Botox procedures in 2005, and that number is climbing. But it's not just aging politicians and actors (John Kerry and Sly Stallone have had to deny they've had it done) who are driving the \$400 million business, it's average young working guys like Andrew. Whether it's because they're besieged with HDTV images of dewy male pop stars or paranoid about the go-getting assistant who looks so... *rested*... or because more than 2,000 new medical spas in shopping malls from Los Angeles to New Jersey have made Botox more accessible, guys are getting the shots at an age when they're still being carded.

"It's as if men feel they are being held to a higher standard now," says Dr. Andrew Jacono, a Long Island-based facial plastic and reconstructive surgeon. "These are wealthy, well-educated guys. They're noticing the changes in their face and want to nip them in the bud before it gets too far. It's the paranoia that gets them in here early. They feel like they have a good 10 to 12 years to make the big bucks, and they want to always look like they're 32, like they're the guy who's up-and-coming."

If there were ever a time for the average, tuckered-out thirtysomething guy to try Botox, it's now. Doctors have dramatically improved their techniques. They once injected a whopping dose in only one place—the two frown lines between the eyebrows—which tended to make the receiver look suspiciously wide-eyed. Over the past decade, with experience, dermatologists have isolated specific muscles in the face—like the ones that lift versus lower an eyebrow—and



have learned how to fine-tune their aim and the amount of Botox they use to make the overall effect more natural and less noticeable. The injected man will look a few years younger, not like David Gest. And since the results don't show up for three to five days, he won't look conspicuously taut if he goes straight from the doctor's office to a budget meeting back at work.

"The way we're training doctors to use it is not to make the patients look like they've had Botox," says Dr. Joseph Eviatar, a New York eye doctor. "We don't want them to paralyze the muscle. We want them to use a small amount to raise a brow or to reshape the face in a subtle way."

Jeff Luce, a 31-year-old New York real-estate broker who's been getting Botox in

his forehead for three years, says, "It's not like this dramatic change. I look a little more awake. I look a little better." He recently expanded his regimen to include a filler for his crow's feet.

People notice he looks good, but they're not able to pinpoint why—which is exactly how most guys experimenting with Botox want it.

Andrew hasn't told his girlfriend, let alone his friends and colleagues, that he got Botox. "I would hate for people to perceive that I was that into my looks," he says. "My mom would definitely kill me, and my guy friends would beat me up."

Lucky for him, no one's asked.

No one's asked Tom (who requested that he be identified only by his first name), either, but the 30-year-old New York public-relations executive is terrified that someone will. For the past two years, he's been having Botox put into his forehead and the sides of his eyes ("I look a hell of a lot better," he says), and has admitted it to no one except his girlfriend. "It's always been my

SHOT IN THE DARK: Results of the new, refined procedures are barely visible. "You just look fresh, like you had a good weekend," says one devotee.



**PLAY HIDE-AND-SEEK
WITH THE PUMP.**

Vehicle shown with available equipment.

nightmare for someone to notice."

Paul, a 28-year-old who owns a chain of restaurants in Hartford, Connecticut, and asked that his last name not be used, got a haircut right after he had Radiesse, a wrinkle filler, injected around his nose. He figured that if anyone wondered why he looked different, he could blame the fresh trim.

Even young male doctors who pump other men full of Botox aren't up front about going under the needle themselves. "It's not something that I like to share with everyone," says one 38-year-old New York dermatologist. "I can't say I talk about it with my male colleagues."

Men may not talk about it, but they keep doing it. Robert (who asked to be identified

only by his middle name), a 35-year-old real-estate appraiser in Venice Beach, has been getting the filler Juvéderm under his eyes for the past year and a half. "It's nothing that anyone would ever notice," he says. "This is the only weird cosmetic thing I do. It took off close to 10 years. You just look really fresh, like you had a good night's sleep or a relaxing weekend."

There's only one real hitch in all of this: Once some people have a taste of the drug, they want more. "When that line goes away, you don't want it to come back," says Luce, the real-estate broker.

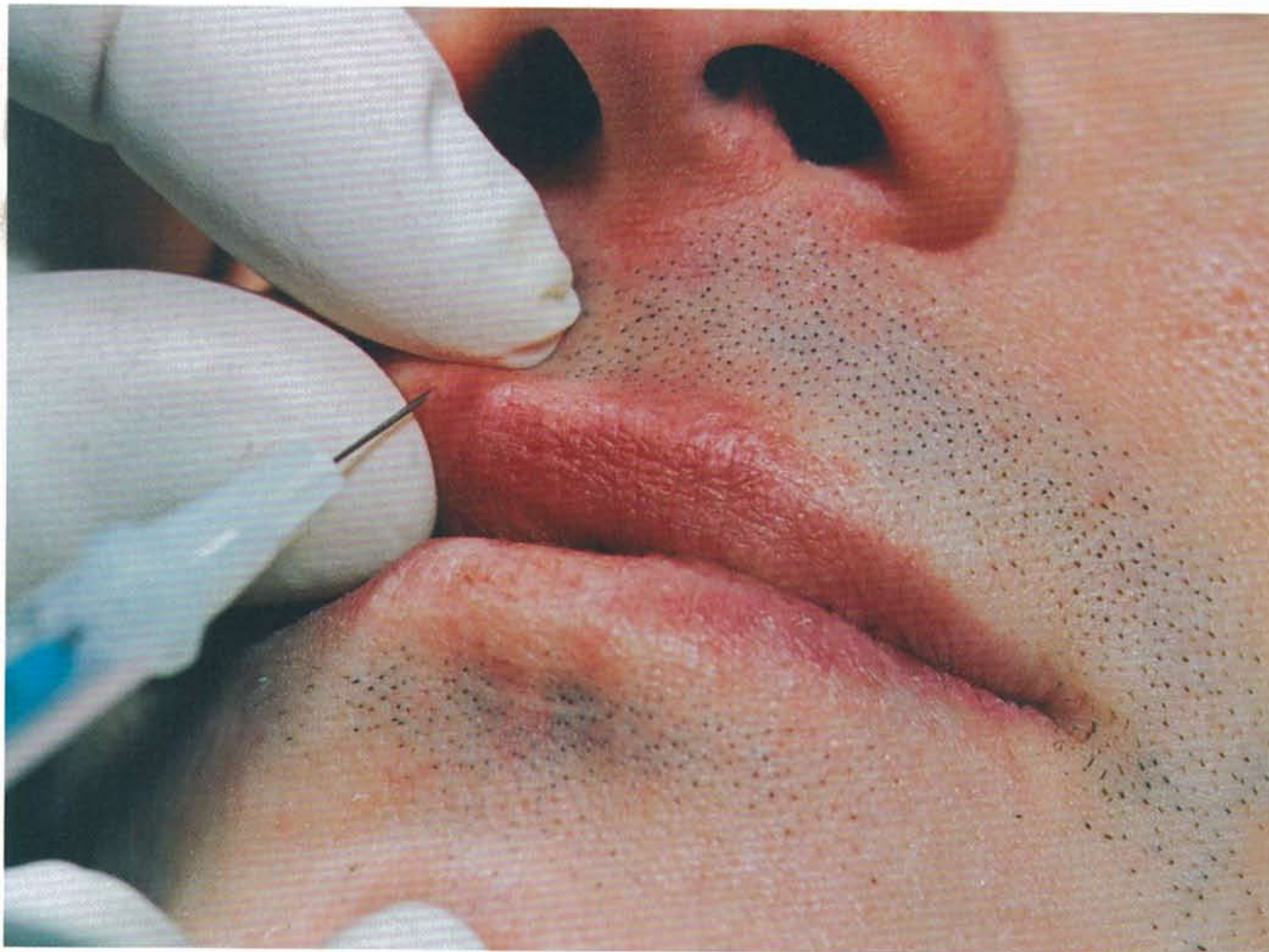
Sean Shekib, a 31-year-old cosmetic dentist in New York who's been getting Botox for the past three years, has already spent almost

\$10,000 on it. "Once you get into it and experience it, you feel like you can't live without it," he says. "It keeps me young. It keeps me feeling good about myself."

Doctors say their male patients race back as quickly as their female patients—as soon as they feel the slightest muscle movement return, they're ready to shell out anywhere from \$400 to \$1,000 for another round of shots. "It's like yuppie heroin," says Dr. Michael Rose, a New York cosmetic surgeon. "When it starts wearing off, you can't wait to get injected again. You'll do anything to make those wrinkles go away." ■

PICKER UPPER: Once they start, some Botox patients can't stop. Doctors say some men come back for fresh injections just as eagerly as women.

"IT'S LIKE YUPPIE HEROIN," SAYS A DOCTOR. "YOU'LL DO ANYTHING TO MAKE WRINKLES GO AWAY."



THE BOTOX HOT SPOTS

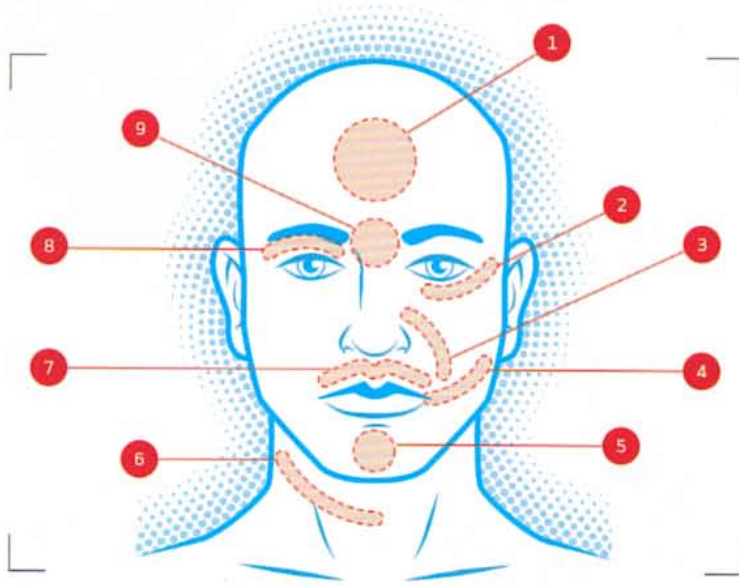


ILLUSTRATION BY MCKIBILLO.

Injected in the right places, Botox can make you look like you've never had a stressful day at work in your life. Here, the areas most likely in need.

- 01**
Center of the forehead (three to four spots):
Softens horizontal brow lines
- 02**
On the side of and underneath the eye
(injected in a semicircle):
Reduces lines at the corners of and underneath
the eyes (usually called "crow's feet")
- 03**
In the fold between the nose and the cheek:
Relaxes a toothy smiler's upper lip
- 04**
Corner of the mouth, about one
centimeter toward the ear and down
diagonally (both sides):
Weakens muscles that pull down
the corners of the mouth
- 05**
Center of the chin:
Erases dimplelike wrinkles that form there
- 06**
In the bands around the neck:
Softens the creases in the neck
- 07**
Top of the lips, right where the pink
part ends (both sides):
Lessens tiny lines around the mouth
- 08**
Slightly under the eyebrow, closer
to the ear than to the nose:
Lifts the brow
- 09**
Between the eyebrows:
Diminishes the two vertical wrinkles
(known as "the elevens")

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