

## **More Women Turning to Botox**

Chicago Daily Herald - July 9, 2006

Laura Goodman never thought she'd be the type to have plastic surgery.

She always thought it was for old, superficial women trying to hang onto their youth.

But then she heard about the wrinkle-reducer Botox, and she was hooked.

"I starting seeing these little wrinkles on my forehead and I thought, 'Why not?' " the 37-year-old graphic designer from the Northwest suburbs said. "I guess I became one of those women, because I've done it four times since I started. I know all my friends are talking about it, too. It's just the thing to do now."

Plastic surgeons throughout the Chicago area say Goodman is like hundreds of women they see coming through their doors these days.

"People who never thought they'd be candidates for plastic surgery are being more open-minded about non-invasive procedures such as Botox," said Dr. Robert Kagan, a plastic surgeon with offices in Elk Grove and Northbrook. "It's kind of like getting their feet wet."

While the number of people having plastic surgery decreased by 12 percent in 2002 from the previous year, the number of those having Botox grew by 31 percent, according to the Arlington Heights-based American Society of Plastic Surgeons.

After its April 2002 approval by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Botox became the top cosmetic procedure performed in the United States, the society's figures show.

Compared with 855,846 patients having the procedure in 2001, about 1.1 million elected to do it in 2002, the ASPS' figures show.

And Kagan says he expects the numbers to rise.

"It's popular and it's going to stay that way," he said.

Botox, which can cost \$500 per treatment, helps eliminate forehead lines, frown lines, crow's feet and neck bands, according to the ASPS. The treatment, which lasts three to six months, works as botulinum toxin is injected into the muscles, blocking the nerve impulses and temporarily paralyzing the muscles that cause wrinkles, the society states.

Kagan says that ever since the FDA approved Botox, and the media has been reporting what it can do to fight wrinkles, people have not stopped calling his office.

However, Kagan also says there are some up-and-coming procedures that might take away at least some of Botox's popularity in the coming years.

Already, he said, he's had several patients inquiring about Artefill, an injectable treatment to fight wrinkles.

Lasandra Cooper, media relations coordinator for the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, said the society agrees Artefill will be all the rage in the coming years, just as Botox is now.

Artefill is mixture of collagen and Plexiglass beads. The beads are made of polymethylmethacrylate, which is used in devices such as contact lenses and bone implants.

A Food and Drug Administration advisory panel has already approved the treatment, which is reported to be permanent, unlike Botox.

That permanence is what already is attracting people to the treatment, said Dr. Victor Lewis, who says he has patients asking how soon they can get it.

Lewis, a Chicago-based plastic surgeon, said the treatment is wildly popular in Europe, and he expects it to get the same response in the United States.

“People are always looking for new ways to repair years of sun damage, and they hear this could do it,” Lewis said.

However, he said, he feels Botox will continue to be popular, because it is temporary.

“Because it’s not permanent, it’s a way for people to try it and see if they like it,” Lewis said. “If they don’t like it, it goes away.”

Cooper said there have been some side effects - such as rashes and lumps - associated with Artefill that Botox doesn’t have.

“For that reason, we think Botox will remain popular,” she said. (C) 2003 Chicago Daily Herald. via ProQuest Information and Learning Company; All Rights Reserved