

Young Botox clients fight lines and worry doctors

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Doctors are alarmed by an increase in the number of WA women in their 20s who are turning to Botox to preserve their youthful looks.

The procedure, commonly used to treat wrinkles, was now favoured as a precautionary measure against early signs of ageing, cosmetic surgeons claimed.

Cosmetic surgeon Glenn Murray said about one in 10 patients wanting Botox was under 30.

"Research on the internet shows Botox not only treats wrinkles but it can potentially prevent them," he said. "It has been shown to either permanently relax the muscle, or it can make the muscles in your face smaller because they aren't being used as much. Most of the time though, the effects will be reversed if you don't continue with the injections."

Dr Murray said that although he did not recommend Botox to patients in their 20s, there were advantages of having the injections younger.

"Your skin is like a piece of paper, the more you crunch it, the more it creases," he said. "If you get Botox when you're younger, it stops the muscle from moving a lot and creasing your skin. And because the lines are finer in younger people, they are easier to soften and sometimes fall away completely."

Elizabeth Sarris, 25, had a Botox injection to treat her frown line this year.

Ms Sarris, a skin technician and nursing student, said she had the procedure after workmates recommended it.

"When I noticed a fine line forming on my forehead, I spoke to a few women at the office and they recommended I get Botox," she said.

Ms Sarris was happy with the results and had recommended the procedure to friends.

"Three of my girlfriends have got it done already and they are between age 25 and 28," she said.

"Skin products are expensive and you only get the minimum results.

"With Botox you get instant results and it prevents the lines before they form properly. I



Image control: Elizabeth Sarris, 25, is one of an increasing number of young women opting for Botox procedures. Picture: Lee Griffith

think if something makes you feel better, look better, you can afford it and there's minimal negative effects, then why not?"

But Women's Interests Minister Robyn McSweeney said young women should be careful about committing to unnecessary treatments such as Botox.

"The bottom line is it is a very expensive measure, especially when it's not necessary," she said. "If you start in your 20s and you have to have injections every

three or so months to keep up the 'look', then the costs are certainly going to add up by the time you hit your 50s."

Botox injections cost from \$200 a session and last three to six months.

The Cosmetic Physicians Society of Australasia estimates that Australians spent \$345 million on non-surgical cosmetic procedures such as Botox and laser hair removal last year.

Australian Medical Associa-

tion vice-president Steve Hambleton said he was concerned about the psychological issues associated with people in their 20s having Botox injections.

"I think it's yet another example of people aspiring to the unrealistic ideal of the perfect body," he said. "Everyone wants to look their best but pumping expensive toxins into your face to make you feel better about yourself is both disturbing and unfortunate really."

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