

THE MAGAZINE ABOUT SHOPPING

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# the great erase

Botox is pricey and it does hurt—but it zaps wrinkles completely. Now M.D.s are coming out of their offices and into spas to make the experience more relaxing.



**S**omewhere between a two-week spa vacation and a full face-lift, Botox injections get rid of wrinkles like nothing else on earth. A derivative of botulin (we're not going to lie, botulism is one of the most toxic diseases ever discovered, but despite that fact, no one's ever gotten it from Botox), it paralyzes the muscle it's injected into, smoothing away the wrinkles. First used 30 years ago to treat facial tics, patients noted that Botox also made them look younger—and a new (if slow-growing, at first) treatment was born.

Performed by an experienced doctor—we trust that you wouldn't allow a needle-wielding manicurist to come within three feet of your face—Botox can offer instant gratification. "The effect can be immediate, or take up to three days, but it's so dramatic you can't miss it," says Dr. Fredric Brandt, the Miami- and New York-based dermatologist famous for his Botox technique; he's pioneered brow- and neck-lifts that rival the results of surgical procedures, yet involve no recovery time. Indeed, a doctor's technique is key,

so get a referral from someone who's already taken the plunge.

Many spas now offer Botox alongside their usual lineup of facials and massages. Treatments usually last 15 to 25 minutes, and can be tacked onto the end of most spa experiences. You shouldn't lie down for a few hours afterward so the Botox doesn't migrate into other muscles; only sitting-up treatments, like manicures, should be performed then. It does hurt a bit



## Los Angeles

**WHERE:** Ona, 323-931-4442

**DETAILS:** Base price for eyes and forehead is about \$350 per area, depending on how much Botox is used.

**VIBE:** The waiting room is luxury à la Bali: teak furniture, Hindu sculptures, private gardens, and trays of exotic fruit.

**BONUS:** It's imperative that you book the sinful-sounding 20-fingered Onaah massage.



## New York City

**WHERE:** Skinklinic, 212-521-3100

**DETAILS:** Upper face treatments start at \$375; lower face treatments (like chin and mouth lines) are \$300. Treat three areas together for \$900. "Everything is developed for the individual," explains Dr. Soren M. White. "We want it to be extremely personalized."

**VIBE:** Modern, clean, and futuristic, this cosmetic dermatology center is serious but relaxing.

**BONUS:** Ask for a Skinklinic "skinscription"—a customized diagnosis of your skin, plus expert-recommended treatments and tips to keep you glowing at home.

(whenever people start saying things like "mild discomfort," you know you're in for it), but you can request a numbing cream.

Botox's effects last about four months, and, as the registered nurse at L.A.'s Ona spa, Eugenia Shakhnovich, points out, it also has a preventative effect: "You're not using those muscles while they're relaxed, so the wrinkle can't get any deeper." —Amy Thomas

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