

Botox in a jar: £50 'facelift' cream arrives in the UK

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Women through the ages have searched for the magic ingredient.

Many put themselves through plastic surgery or chemical injections to try to turn back the tide of ageing.

Now, if the manufacturers are to be believed, the secret has been discovered ... and captured in a bottle.

A new face cream billed as the "facelift in a jar" has now gone on sale in Britain



Miracle cure? Two women show the effects in publicity shots



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- **More men plumping for botox to smooth away ravages of time**

The Athena 7 Minute Lift claims to be the first cosmetic offering an injection-free and painless alternative to Botox.

It costs £50 for a 15ml tub - compared to £350 for a typical Botox procedure - and promises to take just seven minutes to kick in.

It is said to work by temporarily 'freezing' the skin and filling in fine lines and wrinkles. Although the cream lasts only 24 hours, daily use is claimed to permanently reduce signs of ageing.



Millions of women are hoping the cream will give them smoother skin

Independent tests by the American Medical Association suggested that the cream reduced the appearance of facial creases by 84 per cent.

It is already very popular in the U.S. but has only just gone on sale in this country after six months of wrangling over licensing.

However, word has quickly spread overseas, aided by celebrity fans including Friends stars Jennifer Aniston and Courtney Cox, helping to push Internet orders to a staggering 200,000.

The 7 Minute Lift is expected to sell out from upmarket pharmacies in the UK and online within a week.

Another batch of the cream is already on order for its target market of women aged 28 to 69.

As it is meant to be used in only very small quantities, the 7 Minute Lift, which took five years to develop, is said to last for up to three months - or 90 applications.

Lisa Porter, a 46-year-old housewife from Boston, tried the cream this year after it was featured on the television show, Good Morning America.

She said: "Having spent thousands on anti-ageing creams, I was sceptical but was blown away by the immediate results.

"I use it on my frown lines and around the eye and lip area, and have noticed a big difference, particularly around the crow's feet area. I am convinced it has taken years off me."

The incredible popularity of the 7 Minute Lift is being compared to that of Boots' Number 7 Protect and Perfect.

Costing £17 for 30ml, the beauty serum was backed by scientists and sold out within minutes of going on the shelves.

Sales rocketed by 2,000 per cent after it was endorsed by independent experts at the University of Manchester and then featured on BBC2's science programme Horizon.

Boots stores as well as the company's website sold out.

Botox works by relaxing the facial muscles. It is injected directly into the face and the effects last for six months. Around 10,000 women in Britain have twice-yearly treatments.

But growing numbers of men are also turning to the treatment. Plastic surgeons said more than ever are paying to help fight the ravages of middle age.

At some clinics, the number having the jabs has risen by almost a third in a year.

Injections of gels to iron out lines and plump up the lips are also popular, along with lip implants.

Recent figures showed a surge in the numbers having liposuction on their 'man boobs'.

• HOW IT WORKS ITS MAGIC

The cream's most active ingredient is acetyl hexapeptide-3, which is behind the "freezing" effect on skin.

The product helps remove free radicals from the skin, giving a tightening and lifting effect. It also helps reduce the size of pores, giving a smoother appearance.

Twelve essential oils combine naturally, stimulating cells in the body's interstitial fluid, effectively plumping them up with water.

Chamomile oil and sesame oil smooth cells, making the skin look shinier and fresher.

Ascorbic acid aids collagen growth - vital for plumped up skin - and retinyl palmitate increases cell turnover.