

Do wrinkle cures really work?

TESSA BOASE and CASILDA GRIGG, Daily Mail - 24th January 2003

Younger-looking skin seems suddenly to be within our reach. We can, it appears, achieve smooth, youthful faces with injections, laser beams, facials and even electrical acupuncture.

The variety of cures for facial lines seems dazzling, and there is much talk of the lunch-time face-lift.

The celebrities' most famous wrinkle cure is Botox, a toxin derived from the botulinum bacterium and credited with Brit award-winner Kylie Minogue's unlined brow.

At present, such a solution to ageing is expensive. Under current legislation, Botox must be prescribed by a doctor and be administered under medical supervision.

But in America, France and Switzerland, Botox has been approved for cosmetic use. Within the next few months, Britain is expected to follow the U.S.'s lead and allow Botox to be administered by beauticians with no medical qualifications. This will certainly make the treatment cheaper, but at what risk?

Recovery times for some of these treatments are months, not minutes. In addition, while certain treatments fade after months, others are permanent, with little chance of successful reversal of the procedure.

Botox, if used to excess in the hands of an unskilled practitioner, can leave the patient with a frozen, immobile face, unable even to close their eyes.

However, the lure of youth seems to be so strong that no procedure, however outlandish, is considered by some to be too risky so long as it promises reduced lines, plumper skin and smaller pores.

Before committing to a treatment, always ask the practitioner what experience and training they have. Also, ask to see and talk to patients they have treated.