

# What Can You Expect When Starting Botox and Filler?

Injectable facial treatments for wrinkles, like Botox and fillers, are popular for a reason — they're effective, affordable and require much less recovery time than surgical face lifts. Research has predicted that the injectables market could grow by as much as 14 percent over the next few years. Many people turn to dermal fillers and Botox to slow down or prevent the signs of aging and maintain a younger look, but there are limits to what these treatments can do. If you've ever wondered, "Can filler prevent wrinkles?", or pondered the possibility of using Botox to keep wrinkles away, explore our guide to these aesthetic procedures for the answers.

## What Types of Injectable Wrinkle Treatments Are Available?

Before learning what filler and Botox can do for you, it may be helpful to explore the different forms that are available. Most injectable wrinkle treatments fall into one of two categories: botulinum toxin or dermal filler.

### Botulinum Toxin

Botulinum toxin is a substance made by the bacterium *Clostridium botulinum*. It occurs naturally in many places in the world, but it rarely makes people sick. When it does, it can result in botulism, a serious illness that causes muscle paralysis and difficulty breathing.

When used in aesthetic treatments, however, botulinum toxin is generally safe. This toxin is the active ingredient in many injectable wrinkle treatments, including Botox, Xeomin, Dysport and Daxxify. It works by temporarily paralyzing some of the muscles in the face that cause wrinkles. When the muscles can't move, the skin smooths out, resulting in fewer wrinkles. An injection like this typically lasts three to six months before it needs to be done again. It can be done in a doctor's office on an outpatient basis.

### Dermal Filler

Like Botox, dermal fillers reduce the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles. However, these treatments don't work by freezing facial muscles. Filler treatments for wrinkles add substances under your skin that make it more plump, so it doesn't sag as much. The ingredients in dermal fillers vary. They can include:

**Hyaluronic Acid (HA):** This is a type of sugar that is naturally present in your body. When combined with water and made into a gel, it can reduce wrinkles. The HA in dermal filler can

come from either bacteria or animal tissues. Injectables that use hyaluronic acid include Restylane, Juvederm and Voluma.

**Poly-L-Lactic Acid (PLLA):** PLLA is a synthetic polymer that is compatible with the human body. It is often used for non-aesthetic medical purposes, like absorbable stitches. When used for wrinkles, it works much like hyaluronic acid to add volume to the skin. PLLA injections can also stimulate the body to produce more collagen, a substance that gives skin its elasticity and youthful appearance. The only PLLA injectable on the market is called Sculptra.

**Calcium hydroxylapatite (CaHA):** This is a substance that occurs naturally in our teeth and bones. When used for wrinkles, it works in a similar manner to the other types of fillers. Like PLLA, CaHA is also thought to stimulate collagen production. Radiesse is the only CaHA injectable that is currently available.

**Polycaprolactone (PLC):** Like PLLA, PLC is a non-natural polymer that is absorbable by the human body. Its microspheres (tiny round particles) give the skin volume and encourage it to produce more collagen. Injections of PLC can last anywhere from 18 months to three years. Ellansé is an injectable treatment that uses PLC.

## Can Botox and Filler Prevent Wrinkles?

Many people start thinking about injectable treatments for wrinkles because they want to maintain the youthful appearance of their skin. This is known as “prejuvenation.” The theory is that removing wrinkles from aging skin (rejuvenation) may be harder than preventing it in the first place. Some scientific research has suggested that filler can stave off the signs of aging. A study published in the *Archives of Dermatology* found that when the hyaluronic acid filler Restylane is injected, it stretches skin cells, encouraging them to make more of their own collagen. And more collagen means that your skin stays more elastic.

There is also a preventative injectable known as “baby Botox.” Just as it sounds, this treatment uses the same botulinum toxin as a traditional injectable, but in far smaller amounts. The injection is also hyper-localized — so instead of doing your entire forehead, your doctor might concentrate on one particular spot that’s likely to develop a wrinkle over time. Baby Botox can also be a good treatment for someone who wants a more natural, subtle effect.

But while injectable treatments can help you slow down the development of wrinkles, a prejuvenation routine won’t make you look like a 20-year-old in your 60s. As we get older, our skin ages with us, and it naturally loses volume and elasticity over time. Botox and filler can help your skin stay fresher-looking for longer, but it isn’t a permanent fountain of youth. You can’t escape aging, but regular prejuvenation treatments could help you shave some years off of your appearance.

Another thing to remember when starting preventative Botox or fillers is that these treatments must be repeated every few months to keep preventing wrinkles. The effects of Botox and

similar injections last around three to four months. Filler injections can last anywhere from six months to two years, depending on the type of filler and the part of the face that is injected. Make sure that you like and trust the medical professional that is handling your wrinkle treatments — because you will be seeing them fairly often.

In addition to getting Botox and fillers, there are also other steps that you can take to minimize the development of wrinkles, including:

- **Wearing sun protection.** Apply a sunscreen of 30 SPF or higher every day to all parts of your skin that aren't covered by clothing.
- **Stopping smoking and drinking less alcohol.** Both of these habits can age your skin prematurely.
- **Applying a good facial moisturizer every day.** Skin that stays hydrated looks younger.
- **Avoiding tans.** If you want a bronzed look, use a good self-tanner instead of baking your skin outside or in a tanning bed.
- **Eating a healthy diet.** Make sure to work lots of fresh fruits and vegetables into your meals; it may help prevent some forms of damage to your skin.