

'I try to keep people looking natural'

I want your job

Cosmetic Doctor

Dr Cyrille Blum, 56, is chief medical adviser for botonics, a board of cosmetic doctors. He was one of the first doctors in the UK to make Botox house calls on his motorbike.

What do you actually do?

I specialise in non-surgical cosmetic treatments, reducing wrinkles with Botox and fillers, and performing laser fat-reduction treatments and facial peels. I work from a clinic in London, but I also make house visits on my motorbike. A lot of my male clients, prefer to get treatments discreetly at home. I even have one client who lives in a guarded mansion, who tells me what name I have to give to his guard. Nobody likes other people to think they need help to look good.

What's a typical day at work like?

As I'm self-employed, I organise my day around my patients. I go to people's homes on my motorbike in the morning and evening, when it's free to park. I might have my first appointment at 7.30am, and my last after dinner. During the middle



of the day, I usually work in my clinic, having consultations and performing treatments. Because patients need to see me during their lunch break, I grab a sandwich later, at around 3pm or 4pm. I might be working from 7am to 11pm.

Why do you love your job?

I've been a doctor for 30 years, and I still find that every patient is different. Every meeting is like a social encounter: I see all different layers of society - I might meet an actor, then a buyer for Harrods, then a carpenter, then a young model. I saw one lady who was 65 or so, and had just come back from the hospital after being treated for cancer. She said that she still wanted to show a good face to the world.

Is there anything that's not so great about it?

It's hard to say "no". People come to me and say, "I want that, that and that treatment". I have to refuse if I think it's too much, and sometimes they hate me as a result. I try to keep people looking natural - I still think wrinkles are necessary on a face. Your face needs to be able to express real emotions, otherwise no one will know what you are thinking. There's also a big fear of any kind of risk in this country, which translates to a lot of paperwork.

What skills do you need to do the job expertly?

Formal medical training is necessary. You have to know how to inject people properly and should never stop learning.

A lot of human skills are needed - you have to understand and love your patients, like a father with a child - to be authoritative, yet open to discussion.

Do you have any advice?

You have to be passionate about it. I'd advise people to build a good knowledge of your patients, especially those in careers that require them to photograph, like acting and modelling. Focus on the patient - we're injecting people with needles, and it can be traumatic if you aren't paying 100 per cent attention. And you have to keep good judgement. You're playing with people's health, so you must be extremely cautious.

What's the salary and career path like?

Most people start as doctors, then add cosmetic work. I charge £200 for one session of Botox, but there really is no limit to what you could earn. It could be anything from £20,000 a year, to millions - in the cosmetic field, money is always present. I don't have a Ferrari, but I do have a good motorbike.

www.botonics.co.uk

For information on training in cosmetic surgery and non-surgical cosmetic medicine, visit the British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons website at www.baaaps.org.uk

'How can my daughter get to medical school?'

The careers advisor

Caroline Haydon



My daughter is doing A-levels in maths, biology and chemistry. She was rejected without interview to study medicine despite predicted A grades and considerable work experience. Should she take a gap year and re-apply, try for another course and aim to transfer to medicine, or apply as a graduate?

There are up to 10 people applying for every medical school place, so competition is fierce.

A gap year would mean she could not only travel or work but that she would re-apply with achieved grades and as a mature person with wider experience.

Transferring from another course is not a good fall-back plan. Applying as a graduate is an option, but entry is nearly three times more competitive.

Make your daughter take the UK Clinical Aptitude Test (Ukcat) now used by most of the country's medical schools. If not, she should sit the test this year (details are on the Ucas website) for entry in 2008.

I NEED A NEW VOCATION

I am 39 and used to be a monk until I lost my faith. I have been living outside the UK for nine of the last 10 years, which seems to make me ineligible for civil service or police careers.

You shouldn't have a problem with civil service departments, except the Foreign Office (FCO), security services, and some posts within the Ministry of Defence. All of these issues about security and will make stipulations about how long you have lived here.

Have a look at the online career-planning tool on the Graduate Prospects website - www.prospects.ac.uk/links/pplanner. And sign up to the Linguanet forum on the site of Cilt, the National Centre for Languages, where people post requests regarding career and job searches (www.cilt.org.uk/discussion.htm#linguanet-forum).