

▶ begin to wither as subsequent injections weaken them, so the same dose that lasted four months to begin with, could eventually last eight or nine.

Popularity of MBTs in the business world is now surging just as dramatically as it did in the showbiz world. Busy city executives regularly swap their lunchtime workout for a 'lunchtime facelift' instead. Patrick Bowler, of the British Association of Cosmetic Doctors, says, "Ten years ago I was giving Botox to between five and 10 patients a year. Now I treat more than 200 a month."

There is no anaesthetic to risk, no scars to hide and minimal bruising to disguise. There's also the matter of cost – far less than invasive procedures. MBTs start from around £150. It's a price that millions worldwide are happy to pay. In an increasingly competitive commercial milieu, youth flirts with success just as much as it does in LA. To many image-conscious London executives their



"I HAD IT ONCE A FEW YEARS AGO. I LIKED THE RESULTS AT THE TIME BUT I WOULDN'T HAVE IT AGAIN. I LOVE MY LINES."

TARA PALMER TOMKINSON, TV PRESENTER AND FORMER HELLRAISING 'IT' GIRL

## BOTOX – LIVE

BEFORE



It is treatments such as Botox that are knocking down the walls between the spa and the surgery.

I visited Ernestis Cobella's Akqa Salon on High Street Kensington in London to see Botox being administered first hand. I hate needles so was nervous about how I would cope watching lots of injections, but I was also incredibly curious to see Botox in action.

Cobella are working in partnership with Botonics, a new company offering MBTs in salons and selected spas. For £80 travel expenses, on top of the cost of the treatment, Botonics will treat you at home.

Managing Director, Canadian Bill Green, is a fan of Botox and dermal filler treatments. Dr Cecil Blum is a French doctor who works in London as a GP and MBT practitioner. They joined forces to create Botonics earlier this year.

Sarra, the patient has been relaxing with anaesthetic gel on her face for half an hour. By the time Dr Blum is ready to begin, her face is numb.

The syringe used for Botox is an insulin syringe, usually for diabetics. The needle is so spindly, it looks like a hair. Sarra is not bothered one bit by the Botox injections. She says, "I could actually go to sleep!" She also has filler injected into the lines that run from her nose to her mouth. There is just the tiniest tinge of redness where her skin was injected.

There are many more injections than I expected. With the filler, Dr Blum injects and

then massages it under the skin to avoid any unnatural looking hard lines. He injects the Botox very precisely around Sarra's eyes – he wants to keep her laughter lines. He is also very careful around her eyebrows. Badly positioned Botox here can create a very surprised look.

Far from finding the treatments ghoulish to watch, I'm mesmerised and convinced that if ever I feel the need for wrinkle reduction, this is the road I'll choose. The immediate results are very impressive, particularly the fillers.

The Botox is slower to take effect. After 30 minutes, you see a noticeable difference and any redness has gone, but after seven days the effects will be much more profound and they'll stay for about four months. Skin type and skin care will determine how long the treatment lasts, and everyone is different.

Although they are happy to help the young prevent wrinkles with Botox, Botonics insist they take an ethical approach to treatment. "Less is more," says Dr Blum. "I will not treat those I believe are heading towards the 'mask look'."

"I wasn't popular with a 25-year-old model who came to me recently," he said. "I treated her once but refused the second time. She was only having Botox because a photographer had made a comment about the tiny lines between her nose and mouth."

"There was nothing wrong with her face and I wouldn't be party to obsession."

AFTER 1/2 HOUR

