

Information for Patients

Considering Non-surgical Cosmetic Procedures

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Introduction

The popularity of non-surgical cosmetic treatments such as botulinum toxin (Botox®) and dermal fillers (such as Restylane®) is growing, and these treatments are now offered by medical and dental clinics and beauty salons.

Some of these treatments have a permanent effect, but many only last for a few months. They do not involve surgery, but that does not mean that they are risk-free. They are invasive procedures and you should always think carefully about the benefits and risks before you have these treatments.

Who should carry out these treatments?

Although many of these treatments are currently available on the high street, this does not mean that they are all unregulated. Laser and intense pulsed light clinics **must** be regulated by the Healthcare Commission, and you should ask to see details of their current registration before agreeing to any treatments.

Botox® is a prescription-only medicine, and **must** be prescribed by a doctor, or dentist and from 1 May 2006, Nurse Independent Prescribers are now able to prescribe Botox® and Vistabel® independently. Ask the prescriber if he or she is a:

- Doctor who is registered with the General Medical Council;
- Dentist who is registered with the General Dental Council;
- Nurse who is registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Council

Prescribers may delegate the administration to a suitably qualified and competent other person.

Do not have any treatment unless you can be satisfied that they meet the above requirements.

Other non-surgical cosmetic treatments are not currently regulated and are carried out in hospitals, clinics and beauty salons by doctors, dentists, nurses and beauty therapists. You must make sure that the person or people offering the treatment is adequately trained and sufficiently experienced to enable them to deliver the treatment competently and safely.

The Department of Health plans to regulate the use of Botox® and dermal fillers, so keep checking this website for up to date information.

Questions to ask

If you are considering a non-surgical cosmetic treatment there are a number of questions you should ask to help you to decide whether to have a treatment and where to have it carried out.

- Who will carry out the treatment?
- How long have they been trained in this treatment and do they have a certificate of accreditation?
- How frequently do they carry it out?
- Do they have professional indemnity insurance?
- Is the treatment right for me?
- How long does the treatment take?
- Is the treatment painful and if so what form of anaesthesia is used?
- Is all equipment used sterile and used only for me?
- For dermal fillers – what is the filler made of and do I need a test to find out if I am allergic to it?
- For Botox® - will I see a doctor, dentist, or an Independent Nurse Prescriber and will he or she prescribe the Botox®?
- What are the risks involved?
- Are there any other treatment options available for me to achieve the results I want?
- Do you have any 'before and after' photographs that I can see?
- What type of aftercare regime will I need after treatment?
- Will I need pain relief following treatment?
- Will I have swelling or bruising and can these be treated?
- At what stage will I be able to judge the results of treatment?
- Will I be reviewed after the treatment – and is this included in the price?
- How long do the results last?
- What will be the cost of the treatment, including any materials I may need after it?
- Will I need a course of treatments?
- If I change my mind and decide not to complete the treatment, do I still need to pay the full cost for the treatment?
- What will happen if I am unhappy with any aspect of the treatment?
- Will my photographs be shown to anyone else for any reason?