Botox

BY ELIZABETH DEHN

I told myself I would never get Botox. It wasn't just the idea of being injected with a paralysis-inducing toxin. Or the Botox-gone-bad on The Real Housewives of the OC. I simply didn't think I would ever need it. Ah, youth.

Now in my 30s, I have developed the “11’s”—cosmetic slang for the two creases between one's eyebrows. My lines aren't deep enough to make me look perpetually angry or confused, but I did wonder if Botox could ward off further furrowing. The answer—a resounding yes—came from Dr. Charles Crutchfield of Crutchfield Dermatology. He explained that Botox prevents muscles from contracting—and if they can't contract, they can't cause the dreaded frown lines.

Crutchfield administers 25 to 50 Botox treatments per week, which is reassuring as he aims a long syringe at my forehead. He asks me to furrow my brows so he can locate the five muscle areas responsible for the frown lines there and inject them with Botox. With each shot I experience a brief, pinching sensation. The only real discomfort is hearing the crackling sound of the needle piercing each muscle—a grisly reminder that this is no facial.

While the procedure takes only about five minutes, the results aren't immediate. It takes about a week for my 11's to completely disappear. When I try to look angry or confused, I can't. My forehead feels stiff, and yes—paralyzed. It's a strange sensation, and I'm not sure I like it—until I realize the payoff: I look incredibly well rested, like I've been on vacation. I can see why people get hooked on this stuff. The effect will last about four months—at which point the lines will return and I may visit Crutchfield for another round of Botox. Never say never.

What: Botox
Where: Crutchfield Dermatology,
1185 Town Centre Dr., Eagan,
651-209-3600, crutchfielddermatology.com
Time: 15 minutes
Price: $300–$500