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FDA warns of possible Botox side effects

Originally posted on: Friday, February 08, 2008 by **Kate Eckman**
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FORT MYERS: There are new warnings emerging from the FDA about the dangers of Botox. The age defying product quickly gained popularity and is widely used. But NBC2's Kate Eckman found out the rules for Botox use may be the cause of its problems.

Botox is the popular cosmetic enhancement best known for quickly minimizing wrinkles while regaining a youthful appearance.

"I just had really good results. I've noticed fewer lines every time I get it done," said Botox user Adrian Kastner.

Kastner says he is concerned about his appearance and that's why he goes to a certified doctor for the injections.

Dermatologist Dr. Kimberly Davidson gives Botox injections to patients everyday.

"We use very small doses and we use it in very localized areas in the face," said Dr. Davidson. "A little bit of Botox properly placed across the forehead there would smooth that out a little bit."

She isn't worried about the Food and Drug Administration's new Botox warning. The FDA is reviewing the safety of the product after recent reports of paralysis and even death in some patients.

Davidson says she uses about 50 units of Botox on the average person. And she says patients who became paralyzed or even died from Botox received at least 10 times this amount.

"The reports that have come out have been extremely high doses and have been in people with other medical problems and treating things other than cosmetic issues," said Dr. Davidson.

The FDA says most deaths occurred in children treated for cerebral palsy-associated limb spasticity - a use not approved in the U.S.

But serious reactions were reported in cases involving a variety of doses. Dr. Davidson stresses the importance of getting your injections from a board certified doctor.

"If you're using an injector who's not trained and they don't know, specifically, the facial anatomy and where they're injecting, you could run into lots of problems," said Dr. Davidson.

Until the FDA completes its review, both doctors and patients should watch for signs of body weakness, trouble swallowing, or trouble breathing.

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