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## BEST BETS IN BEAUTY



Quick fix for wrinkles. But is it safe?

level of toxin is enough to keep the muscles still for three to six months, it's not nearly enough to make you ill. "It would take at least 4,000 units to make a human sick," says Dr. Binder.

That said, there are a few points to consider before you try botox. There's a slim chance that the injection site may bruise. To minimize this risk, avoid taking bruise-encouragers such as aspirin, alcohol, and vitamin E one week prior.

Also, there's a chance, though extremely remote, that the substance could travel and affect other muscles. To discourage that possibility, never rub or massage the area immediately afterward.

Even after heeding these precautions, some people do experience side effects. "There's about a 1% chance that a botox injection for frown lines will cause one eyelid to droop very subtly," explains Debra Jaliman, MD, clinical instructor of dermatology at Mount Sinai Medical

**Q:** I'm thinking about getting botox injections to decrease the frown lines on my forehead. If botox is made from botulism, are the injections really safe?

**A:** While botox is derived from botulism, a toxic food poisoning, using it to discourage wrinkles is quite safe, says William Binder, MD, a Los Angeles plastic surgeon and one of the original researchers on the use of botox to treat muscle-re-

lated facial wrinkles. Only a minute amount (about 20 units) of botox is injected into a small area of the face to temporarily relax or paralyze the targeted muscles (usually the ones that contribute to crow's-feet and forehead furrows). While this