

Beat the *sweats*

We all know how uncomfortable it can get on hot days when your body starts to sweat. For some people, this normal reaction to heat, nerves or excitement is an embarrassing, daily annoyance.

Hyperhidrosis, or excess sweating, can be a major social hurdle. To alleviate the problem, many plastic surgeons are now using Botox injections in the armpits.

"The Botox option is a fantastic treatment for this problem — it's probably one of the best clinical uses of Botox you could imagine," Dr Timothy Cooper, plastic and reconstructive surgeon at Rodin Clinic, says.

"The feedback is very positive — clients report a major reduction in their sweating within days and it makes their life socially bearable."

WHAT CAUSES HYPERHIDROSIS? "Basically it's overactive nerves supplying the sweat glands — you're just born with those and, during puberty, they can become even more sensitised," Dr Glenn Murray, medical director at Absolute Cosmetic, says.

"The sweat gland is covered in muscle that's continually contracting and the more it contracts, the more sweat it makes and pushes out."

WHAT'S INVOLVED IN THE TREATMENT?

"It takes a lot of courage for people to come in and talk about this," Dr Dennis Millard, director and lead clinician at Utopian Cosmetics, says. "Once they actually come in the door, they're usually so sick of the problem that they just want it gone."

For this reason, most clients are treated on the day they initially visit the surgeon. You can expect about 20 Botox injections in each armpit, injected in a grid-like pattern around the sweat glands.

The treatment will take 15-30 minutes and follow-up procedures

are usually just a short check-in from the clinic to ensure symptom relief.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

The Botox injections block the release of acetylcholine, which is what makes the sweat glands work.

"The Botox injected essentially blocks the nerve to the sweat-gland muscle," Dr Murray says. "This stops it from contracting and sweat is no longer expelled from the gland."

HOW MANY TREATMENTS ARE NEEDED?

The treatments usually last about six to nine months.

"Most of the clients I'll see just get it done for the hotter months," Dr Millard says. "Some people do have refractory sweating at all times though, so they do need to have it treated twice a year."

WHAT ARE THE MAJOR BENEFITS?

"The benefits are primarily social — there's no net health effect of not sweating under your arms other than hygiene," Dr Millard says.

"A lot of it's about confidence — people are very aware when they're sweating under their arms a lot, so knowing they can go out and not have to worry is great for them."

Dr Murray agrees. "The most common reason is embarrassment of the sweat showing through nerves during dates, interviews and meetings," he says.

WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES?

The main alternative to Botox is a surgical sympathectomy — a procedure that divides the sympathetic nerves supplying the armpits with sweat.

"This is a final procedure but it carries risks," Dr Cooper says.

Dr Murray says it is less common. "Non-surgical treatments are more popular over surgery — all surgery has its complications."

HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

This treatment may cost anywhere from \$600-\$1000 each time you get it done. It's not likely you'll get any of it covered by health insurance.

Excessive perspiration can be a socially crippling condition but there are solutions. EMMA CHITTY reports.



Shifting pigmentation

Hormonal skin darkening is notoriously difficult to beat but a new treatment is claiming results. EMMA CHITTY reports.

It's estimated that more than 40 million people worldwide suffer from pigmentation, an unsightly darkening of the skin.

Hormonal pigmentation, or melasma, is caused by increased melanin levels and is one of the most difficult types of pigmentation to remove. It's common in women, often striking during pregnancy or as a side effect of taking the contraceptive pill.

Advanced Beauty Concepts Medispa is now providing a treatment solution for hormonal pigmentation from Spanish-based Mesoestetic — it's called Cosmelan.

"Previous treatments like IPL and needling can't get rid of hormonal pigmentation because of where it's sitting in the skin," says Leigh-Ann Brown, manager at Advanced Beauty Concepts Cottesloe.

"The pigmentation is a lot deeper and the skin needs to be reprogrammed to remove it — which is what this peel will do."

The Cosmelan treatment can also be performed on any skin tone, unlike previous treatments. It begins with an in-salon treatment where a clay-like mask is applied and is to be left on for eight hours and washed off at home.

The treatment requires four to five days downtime, during which you can expect some swelling, tender skin and a sunburnt-like stinging. There will also be some shedding of the skin.

After the treatment, it's essential you follow up with home care.

The Cosmelan treatment costs \$1250.

MY TREATMENT

My skin can be problematic, so I'm often hesitant to trial new treatments on my face for fear of unsightly reactions.

But after my Omnilux and jessner peel experience at Cottesloe's ABC Medispa with spa manager Leigh-Ann Brown, I'm happy — and relieved — with the results.

My treatment first involved time under an Omnilux machine (which resembles a light box) that was placed just above my face and curved down by my ears. The purpose of the Omnilux machine is to stimulate cells in deeper layers of the skin.

Next, I was given a modified jessner peel — consisting of salicylic acid, lactic acid and a small amount of citric acid. Ms Brown explained it was one of their best treatments for skin with congestion and inflammation — hallmarks of my complexion. The pH in the peel does sting but it's not painful and when followed up with a cooling post-peel mask it feels lovely.

My verdict: The team at ABC Medispa Cottesloe have recently won Beauty Therapist of the Year for the second year in a row and Salon/Spa Director of the Year at the Australian Beauty Industry Awards in Sydney and they certainly have that winning feeling about them. I was really happy with my treatments and would happily go back for more.

Emma Chitty was a guest at ABC Medispa Cottesloe. Omnilux light therapy is valued at \$80 and a modified jessner peel is \$149. Phone 9385 5500 or visit abcmedispa.com.au.



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