

# All they want for Christmas is Botox

BY MARIA SONNENBERG  
FOR FLORIDA TODAY

Botox season has arrived at some plastic surgeons' offices, where patients are hurrying to refurbish their faces just in time for the holidays.

"The six to eight weeks before the end of the year is incredibly busy for us," said Melbourne plastic surgeon Dr. Ross Clevens, incoming chief of staff at Wuesthoff Medical Center-Melbourne. "Everyone wants to look as good as possible."

Whether in their 20s or their 70s, it seems patients want to shine during the season, and they believe plastic surgeons can polish the rough edges.

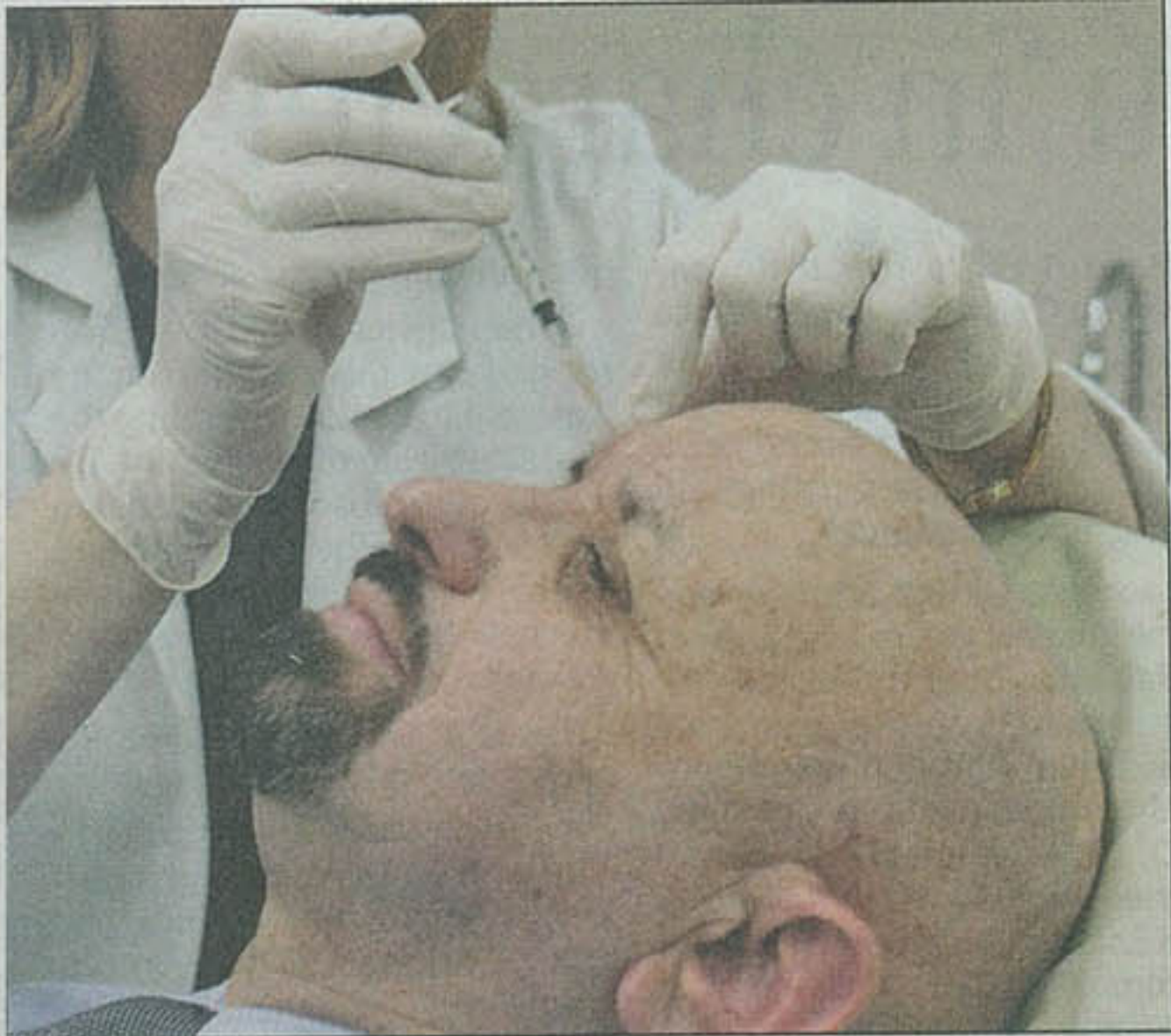
Some patients opt for a \$500 shot of Botox, while others get the full treatment, like a recent patient at Clevens' Center for Facial Cosmetic Surgery. The woman wanted to look really good, so she opted for a face, lip and eyelid lift, as well as skin resurfacing of the face, neck and chest.

"It's like remodeling a room," Clevens said.

Like any good home redecoration, however, the new look is going to cost you, so expect to spend \$30,000 on a complete facial makeover.

But you can still design for less — \$300 to \$500 — with injectable shots of Botox or Juvederm.

See **BOTOX, 5F**



USA Today 2002 file

**Calming wrinkles.** Locally, about 20 percent of Botox clients are men.

## Surgeon experiences surge at year's end

### **BOTOX, from 1F**

To tap into the holiday gift market, a growing number of dermatologists and plastic surgeons have begun offering gift cards for a wide range of treatments, including Botox and Juvederm dermal fillers, as well as laser treatments and facials.

The cost ranges from \$300 to \$500 for a Botox treatment that typically lasts up to four months.

For a gift with a longer life, Juvederm is used to fill in the "parentheses" lines around the nose and mouth for up to a year.

At Clevens' office, although a couple of adult children will present Mom with a face-lift, most of the gift givers are husbands looking for that perfect present that won't be returned.

"Husbands will typically give these gifts to their wives," Clevens said.

Some even wrap the gift in an elaborate act.

"They'll arrange for the procedure beforehand, and come in with their wives for a consultation," Clevens said.

"When the wife gets to the hand-wringing stage, the husband will just say that it's a done deal."

In his years of practice, Clevens has seen a marked increase in holiday aesthetic procedures, primarily due to advances in the

"There's been such an expansion in minimally invasive procedures," he said.

"The injectables have just exploded in popularity in the last 10 years, because patients are so pleased with the results."

A large number of patients interested in the injectable procedures are in their 30s and 40s, but even professional models in their 20s visit for a bit of upkeep.

The rule of thumb is the older the patient, the more work is desired.

"In the 50s, 60s and 70s, the face-lifts and the heavy-duty stuff became very popular," Clevens said.

During the period between Christmas and New Year's, when some companies shut down and many other people take vacations, Clevens sees an influx of cosmetic-surgery patients.

"They want to use that mandatory downtime to have the procedure done, so, that way, they don't lose any work, and they come back looking like they had a great Christmas vacation," he said.

Although the guys seem a little less eager to pamper themselves, about 20 percent of Clevens' patients are men.

"The husbands will see how good the wives look afterwards, and arrange for it themselves," Clevens said. "It's like kicking the