With the advent of neuromodulators, the age of truly minimally invasive rejuvenation was born and along with it the evolution of the art of non-surgical rejuvenation. Especially over the last decade, facial neuromodulation has dramatically evolved. From the moment onabotulinumtoxinA (Botox Cosmetic, Allergan) first landed on the market, it revolutionized the aesthetic landscape. Although Botox was originally indicated for modifying and improving the appearance of lines and wrinkles between the eyes, it allowed physicians to look at patients differently and to assess the various components of facial aging more thoroughly and accurately. Moreover, the presence of botulinum toxins in an aesthetic capacity opened up a dialogue toward rejuvenation with a non-surgical approach that previously had not been possible.

Since then, Botox has received expanded indications, while several other neurotoxin products and non-surgical procedures have taken off, such as soft-tissue fillers as well as skin tightening and resurfacing. We have also seen great advancements in technique and delivery to optimize outcomes with a growing number of products to help patients look like the best versions of themselves and age gracefully without surgery.

Taken together, the vast field of non-surgical procedures and rapidly occurring innovations seem to suggest that perhaps one day—in the not too distant future—we can achieve a new plateau in facial aesthetics, one in which patients can proverbially “forget the facelift.”

A NEW MODALITY

Despite continued innovation in the neurotoxin landscape, studies indicate that about 25 percent of women who are considering wrinkle reduction treatments are not interested in neuromodulators. Despite the massive body of scientific evidence regarding the safety and efficacy of neuromodulators when used as directed and for cosmetic purposes, some feel that toxins are “poisons,” while others may be pregnant or considering pregnancy and do not want to put anything “unnatural” into their bodies.

For these patients, a toxin-free treatment may soon be available. Already approved in Europe and Canada, Iovera delivers cold therapy to temporarily relax the muscles that cause forehead wrinkles. The company has

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In the spectrum of neuromodulation procedures, targeted cold therapy will no doubt play a role in the new age of non-invasive aesthetics. It works by targeting the temporal branch of the facial nerve and temporarily knocking it out in order to smooth the frontalis completely. When used appropriately, cold therapy shows improvement and offers patients and physicians an important new avenue for facial neuromodulation.
spent many years developing the technology to achieve similar effects as neuromodulators but without the toxin. Lovera works by targeting the temporal branch of the facial nerve and temporarily knocking it out in order to smooth the frontalis completely. The effect of typically lasts about 90 days.

**HOW COLD THERAPY WORKS**

Since lovera is a non-toxin procedure, it comes with a unique set of plusses and minuses that are worth considering. Although physicians are not able to refine treatment with lovera the way they can with toxins, this can be a positive, too. That comes with the territory of this being a more straightforward procedure and therefore doesn’t require the kind of finessing to which physicians injecting toxins have become accustomed.

Regarding the frontalis muscle, specifically, toxins can actually be limiting in the sense that if you don’t hit all points evenly, the results can be disproportionate. Additionally, you may also get some hyperdynamic movement in the areas you didn’t hit. The effect of this can be a pulled brow or unevenness. Moreover, since the left and right sides of the frontalis are different, the same treatment will look different on one side than the other. With lovera, however, you are targeting the branch of the nerve, and if one side is different you’re still hitting the muscle on both sides equally. Therefore, your results will be consistent.

Thus, this procedure may be ideal for patients who want a smooth forehead but who don’t want to have to come back to have it checked, since it can all be addressed in one visit in a reliable amount of time.

In terms of efficacy, the results of treatment with lovera are immediate and noticeable, as noted in the clinical trials. In some cases, patients may need to return for re-treatment if you didn’t hit the nerve branch the first time. This is one drawback to performing a nerve block prior to treatment. If the effect wears off in a short amount of time, it is likely that you didn’t hit the nerve branch with the procedure and the patient will need to return to the physician’s office to have it treated.

However, with proper treatment, the results can be significant. Clinical trials showed that roughly 90 percent of patients treated with lovera demonstrated one-point improvement at roughly 30 days after the procedure, while 70 percent achieved two-point improvement.

**NEW OPTIONS**

Targeted cold therapy presents several advantages. However, if approved, [lovera] is unlikely to displace toxin procedures. But it may offer a reliable alternative for the percentage of patients who do not want to receive toxins.

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