

Zinc and Botox: Can the Supplement Really Make Your Treatment Last Longer?

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- Zinc supplements have been lauded as a hack to make Botox injections last longer, but experts say it's not a foolproof solution.
- Botox needs zinc in order to bind to tissue, but there's a lack of concrete evidence proving that additional supplements can extend Botox's effects, experts said.
- In general, zinc supplements are safe to try, but people should consult with a doctor to ensure they're not taking too much.

Whether for aesthetic or medical purposes, most people want their Botox injections to last for as long as possible. Can taking a zinc supplement ensure that your injection goes the distance?

On TikTok, there are a slew of posts from dermatologists and other creators who say taking zinc can help make Botox injections last longer than they otherwise would. This hack has gained considerable traction online.

"Take zinc five days before your treatment and five days after—this will increase the longevity of your neurotoxin," said TikTokker and nurse injector Ava LeClare in a [video](#) viewed over 1.3 million times.

On TikTok, dermatologist Lindsey Zubritsky, MD also [added](#) that taking zinc before a Botox injection “increases the efficacy and how long the Botox lasts by 30%.”

However, others aren’t convinced.

Van Cam, a skin aesthetic injector, [said](#) in a video that the hack is a “half truth,” and that there isn’t enough research right now to support it.

Botox is an injection of the botulinum toxin, made by the bacterium *Clostridium botulinum*, which blocks nerve signals and in turn, forces the muscles to relax. This toxin—also administered under brand names like Xeomin or Jeuveau—has a number of applications, including smoothing wrinkles, [treating chronic migraine](#), and controlling the body’s production of sweat and saliva.¹

But Botox isn’t a forever thing—the effect of the injections wear off between three and six months—and treatments can be pricey.²³ So, does taking zinc really make the effects of Botox last longer? Here’s what experts had to say about the research behind this hack, and what to know before you start taking a [zinc supplement](#)

Can Zinc Really Make Botox Last Longer?

There is an established connection between Botox and zinc, experts said. However, it's not totally clear whether taking zinc supplements can actually affect the staying power of Botox.

“We’re not 100% sure how zinc works [for Botox], but what we do know is that the Botox molecule requires zinc to help it bind to its target more effectively,” [Ife J. Rodney, MD](#), dermatologist and founding director of Eternal Dermatology and Aesthetics, told *Health*.

In theory, if Botox can bind to tissue more easily and have better activation, a person could see a more lasting effect from the treatment, [Cindy Wassef, MD](#), assistant professor of dermatology at the Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, told *Health*.

Even though the two are connected, researchers aren’t sure if increasing your zinc levels automatically translates to improved Botox longevity. There is some data to support the idea, but it’s “soft,” [Joshua Zeichner, MD](#), director of cosmetic and clinical research in the department of dermatology at Mount Sinai Hospital, told *Health*.

That includes a 2012 randomized controlled trial of 77 people who received Botox. In the study, participants were given either 50 milligrams of zinc citrate and 3,000 PU of the enzyme phytase, 10 milligrams of zinc gluconate, or a placebo.⁴

Patients who took the zinc gluconate or placebo didn’t see any sort of difference in how long their Botox lasted. But those in the zinc and phytase group had Botox effects that lasted an average of 30% longer than the others.⁴

Though the results seem promising, the study isn’t perfect.

“Some have questioned the results of this study, as patients were given different zinc doses and no baseline zinc levels were done to show if these patients were deficient or not,” said Wassef.

The study was also small, added [Gary Goldenberg, MD](#), medical and cosmetic dermatologist and assistant professor of dermatology and pathology at the Icahn Sinai School of Medicine at Mount Sinai.

“In real life, there is more variability, with some patients having a positive result, while others don't have a result from taking zinc,” he told *Health*.

Should You Give This Hack a Try?

Though there isn’t a wealth of research to confirm the hack, Rodney said it’s fairly common for dermatologists to recommend that their patients take up to 50 milligrams of zinc for four days leading up to their Botox injection, and on the day of the appointment.

“I believe that taking zinc supplements before your Botox injections can help the Botox to last longer,” she said.

Taking zinc supplements for a short period of time should generally be safe. But these supplements aren’t completely harmless—it is possible to take too much zinc, and it can interfere with other medications you may be taking, said [Scott Keatley, RD](#), registered dietician-nutritionist and co-owner of Keatley Medical Nutrition Therapy.

“People should avoid taking zinc two hours before or four hours after taking an [antibiotic](#), as it can reduce their effectiveness,” he told *Health*. “The same thing is true for those using penicillamine.”

In a perfect world, a person should stick with the tolerable upper intake level of 40 milligrams of zinc a day, [Jessica Cording, RD](#), a New Jersey-based health coach and author, told *Health*.

Otherwise, you run the risk of side effects such as [diarrhea](#), [abdominal cramping](#), and vomiting, she said. And, if someone takes high amounts of zinc for weeks, it can cause issues with copper absorption, and reduce immune function and [HDL cholesterol](#) in the body.⁵

Even if a person is taking smaller amounts of zinc, they still could be at risk for some of these adverse effects.

“A lot of multivitamins contain zinc,” said Cording. “If you’re taking a multivitamin and add a zinc supplement on top of that, you could be getting close to or exceeding that upper intake level.”

If you want to try this out, consult your doctor and be candid about the medications and supplements you’re currently taking, she recommended. It should be safe to take 50 milligrams of zinc for a limited time, if your doctor gives the go-ahead.

If someone would rather not take supplements, there are also other ways to increase the longevity of Botox. Provided you got the injection in your face, certain exercises could help, said Zeichner.

“Studies have shown that facial exercises in the first few hours after injection speed up the time to [wrinkle] improvement,” he said.

But the best way to get Botox to last is to simply stick with the treatment.

“When patients do it consistently over time, the muscle weakens and [the effects] can last longer,” said Rodney.

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