

# Treating laughter lines leaves patients feeling more depressed

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(Medical Xpress)—Injections of botulism toxin A (often referred to as Botox) to reduce crows' feet leaves people feeling more depressed, according to new research by a Cardiff University psychologist.

A study carried out on people who had received Botox treatment for facial lines found that depending on which facial lines were treated, determined how depressed they felt. Consistent with previous findings, the treatment of frown lines left the clients feeling less depressed, yet people who had received treatment for crows' feet reported feeling more depressed.

In a paper delivered today at the British Psychological Society's Annual Conference, Dr Michael Lewis of the School of Psychology explains that reducing facial lines through the application of [Botox injections](#) can affect the way we feel and even how we see the world:

"The expressions that we make on our face affects the emotions we feel; we smile because we are happy but smiling also makes us happy. Treatment with drugs like Botox prevents the patient from being able to make a particular expression. For example, those treated for frown lines with Botox are not able to frown as strongly. This interrupts the feedback they would normally get from their face and they feel less sad."

"The new finding being reported today concerns the impact of treatments for crows' feet. The muscles around the eyes are used when forming a real smile and so it was predicted that treatment of the muscles that cause these will reduce the strength of a smile. The results supported this prediction."

The effects of Botox on other emotions are also considered. Heightened feelings of disgust are a feature of some forms of [Obsessive Compulsive Disorder](#) (OCD). Dr Lewis proposes that drugs similar to [Botox](#) could be targeted to reduce the facial expression of disgust. Such a treatment might reduce the patient's feelings of disgust and hence might reduce their OCD symptoms.

Provided by Cardiff University

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