

Question:

Al-Salāmu 'Alaykum:

I hope this email finds you and everyone at Darul Qasim in the best of health.

Many if not all contemporaries find botox injections for cosmetic enhancement to be impermissible on the premise of it being “taghyīr khalq Allah.” If that is the reasoning for its impermissibility then shouldn't women's makeup be impermissible as well? One may object and say makeup is temporary, however, botox is also deemed temporary.

For arguments sake, one may agree to the above although ascertain the impermissibility of botox by virtue of its unlawful ingredients. If that is the case, would a halal botox injection be permissible?

We need to revisit what exactly taghyīr khalq Allah is. We understand what it means to make something abnormal normal. However, with the revolution of makeup, which has been accepted as permissible, one can quite literally alter the anatomical structure of their face. Often times makeup and lipstick can do a better job at puffing the lips than lip fillers so does that make either or haram? Where do we draw the line?

Lastly, where does an ascetic physician/plastic surgeon fall in all this? Would he/she have to change their job if it's found impermissible to administer botox or inject lip fillers or are the laws pertaining to its administration different?

JazākAllāh Khairun

Answer:

In the name of Allah, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful

Wa' alaykum al-Salām wa raḥmat Allāh wa Barakātuh.

1). Botulinum toxin injection -or Botox- for treatment of facial wrinkles is impermissible; it is a form of *taghyīr khalq* Allah. Altering or changing the normal function of a body part is included in the prohibited form of *taghyīr*. This is understood from the prophetic prohibition of castration.ⁱ The repetitive contraction of the underlying facial musculature -amongst other factors- causes the overlying skin to lose its elasticity or tautness which results in wrinkles forming. Contrary to what may be assumed, Botox **does not** restore the elasticity of the skin; that is why it is more effective for dynamic wrinkles¹ vs. static wrinkles.² The botulinum toxin paralyzes the muscle to its relaxed state, not allowing for the muscle to contract. Hypothetically, if one were to do Botox all over their face, they would essentially freeze their face; there would be no movement or expression. Yes, because it is almost always done locally, it gives the *appearance* of restoration. Paralyzing the muscle to one state is to remove it from its normal function, which is *taghyīr*.ⁱⁱ It is possible that a non-permanent change is categorized as *taghyīr khalq Allah*. Thinning and shaping the eyebrow (*namṣ*) is non-permanent, yet forbidden in the hadith. Similarly, tying human hair (*waṣl*) is prohibited, yet non-permanent.ⁱⁱⁱ

¹ Wrinkles visible when contracting

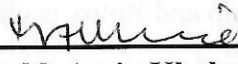
² Wrinkles visible when relaxed

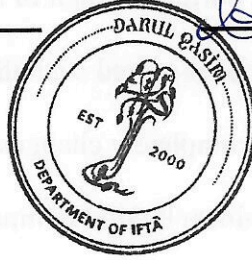
2). The difference between applying a normal amount of makeup and Botox is clear from the above. In any case, makeup is by no means sacred such that it is unrestrictedly allowed. If makeup is applied in a manner which completely changes or disfigures one's face -or violates other Islamic principles, ethics, and values- it will be impermissible.

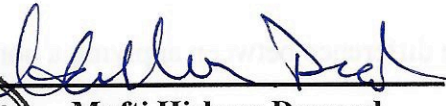
3). Botox may be used for medical purposes, such as treating neck spasms. Similarly, plastic surgery for treating disfigurement is also allowed. Money earned through such procedures for permissible reasons is halal, and for impermissible reasons impure.^{iv}

4). The aforementioned points are all provided within the context of legal discussion. From a reformative point of view (*iṣlāḥ*), we say the following: Although we are discussing the issue of botox in and of itself, no fatwa is given outside of a context. The given context is the self-obsessing selfie culture and the dogma of temporal infatuation. Such procedures only feed into the candidates' fascination, justifying -for them- spending hundreds -and even thousands- of dollars yearly on such extraneous physical details. This procedure is just one symptom of the desire to harness life in this world. Today it is a minimally invasive Botox procedure, and tomorrow it is genome editing. Considering both the legal and the reformative paradigms, we do not see any scope for allowing such a procedure.

And Allah knows best.


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ⁱ Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī, “Kitāb al-Nikāḥ, Bāb Tazwīj al-Mu‘sir alladhī ma‘a-h al-Qur‘ān wa-l-Islām,” in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, ed. by a group of ‘ulamā’ (al-Maṭba‘at al-Kubrā al-Amīriyyah, 1311), 7:4.

حدثنا محمد بن المثنى: حدثنا يحيى: حدثنا إسماعيل قال: حدثني قيس، عن ابن مسعود قال: «كنا نغزو مع النبي ﷺ ليس لنا نساء، فقلنا: يا رسول الله، ألا نستخصي؟ فنهانا عن ذلك

ⁱⁱ Shāh Walī Allah, *Hujjat Allah al-Bālighah*, 1st ed. ed. Sayyid Sābiq (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, 1426/2005), 2:207.

وفي جريان الرسم باتيان الغلمان ووطء النساء في أدبارهن تغيير خلق الله حيث منع المسلط على شيء من إفضائه إلى ما قصد له وأشد ذلك كله ووطء الغلمان فانه تغيير لخلق الله من الجانبين وتأنث الرجال أقبح الخصال، وكذلك جريان الرسم بقطع أعضاء النسل واستعمال الادوية القامعة للباءة والتبتل وغيرها تغيير لخلق الله عز وجل وإهمال لطلب النسل، فنهى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم عن كل ذلك قال: " لا تأتوا النساء في أدبارهن، ملعون من أتى امرأة في دبرها " وكذلك نهى عن الخصاء والتبتل في أحاديث كثيرة

ⁱⁱⁱ “Kitāb al-Libās, Bāb al-Mutanammiṣāt,” in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 7:166.

حدثنا إسحاق بن إبراهيم: أخبرنا جرير، عن منصور، عن إبراهيم، عن علقمة قال: «لعن عبد الله الواشمات والمتفلجات للحسن المغيرات خلق الله، فقالت أم يعقوب: ما هذا؟ قال عبد الله: وما لي لا ألعن من لعن رسول الله وفي كتاب الله، قالت: والله لقد قرأت ما بين اللوحين فما وجدته، قال: والله لعن قرأته لقد وجدته: ﴿وما آتاكم الرسول فخذوه وما نهاكم عنه فانتهوا﴾»

Ibid., “Kitāb al-Libās, Bāb al-Mawṣūlah,”.

حدثني محمد: حدثنا عبدة، عن عبدة، عن نافع، عن ابن عمر قال: «لعن النبي ﷺ الواصلة والمستوصلة، والواشمة والمستوشمة

^{iv} Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī, *al-Aṣl*, 1st ed. ed. Boynukalın (Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 1433/2012), 4:16.

وقال أبو حنيفة: لا تجوز الإجارة على الغناء والنوح. وكذلك قال أبو يوسف ومحمد وقال أبو حنيفة: لا تجوز الإجارة على شيء من اللهو والمزامير أو الطبل. ولا تجوز الإجارة على الحداء ولا على قراءة شعر ولا غيره. ولا تجوز الإجازات في شيء من الباطل. وإن أعطى المستأجر شيئاً من اللهو يلهو به فضاغ أو انكسر فلا ضمان عليه