



Caring For Your Skin



Winter 2023-24

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Welcome to the 32nd issue of the **Caring For Your Skin** Newsletter. In this issue, I address:

- 1) *Daxxify, the longer lasting Botox alternative, now costs less*
- 2) *A promising new vaccine for treating advanced melanoma*
- 3) *Ellacor a new way to treat sagging skin and wrinkles*
- 4) *The risks associated with the long term use of proton pump inhibitors*



Daxxify, the longer lasting Botox alternative, now costs less!

Revance has lowered the cost of Daxxify and we have passed the savings on to our patients. The new prices make Daxxify a more cost effective alternative to the shorter lasting products. After over a year of using Daxxify, we have learned that most patients have found it to start working sooner and to be longer lasting than Botox and Dysport. Most people are getting at least one month longer duration based on surveys and follow-up exams. Daxxify typically started to wear off during the 4th month and completely wore off by 20-24 weeks. Botox and Dysport usually start to wear off in the 3rd month and are completely worn off by 16 weeks. Currently approximately 40% of those who have had Daxxify are requesting it again when they have returned for another treatment. As I said in my previous newsletter written when Daxxify prices were higher, "If not for the higher cost of Daxxify, most patients would have chosen Daxxify again, and would recommend it to others."

The table below shows the new Daxxify prices highlighted in yellow, compared to the old Daxxify prices, and the current Botox and Dysport prices.

Area treated for wrinkles	Botox	Dysport	new Daxxify prices	old Daxxify prices
Lip lines	\$150	\$125	\$155	\$190
Both Crow's feet (CF)**	\$350	\$320	\$390	\$480
Glabella (area between eyebrows) (G)	\$350	\$320	\$390	\$480
Forehead (F)*	\$250-350	\$220-320	\$265-390	\$330-480
2 Areas: CF+F*, or G+F*	\$380-480	\$350-450	420-540	\$525-675
2 Areas: CF+G	\$550	\$520	\$640	\$780
3 Areas: CF+G+F*	\$600-650	\$570-620	\$720-790	\$855-930

*The amount of treatment required for the forehead area is variable among patients as some need more than others.

** Less commonly the crow's feet areas require higher doses, and the price is adjusted accordingly.

Patients that get four or more weeks duration with Daxxify, compared to Botox or Dysport, will be saving money as well as the convenience of fewer visits to the clinic to maintain those results. To put it in a dollar value, the following table shows the relative weekly cost to maintain results under a 16 week duration of Botox and Dysport compared to a 20 week duration of Daxxify, as by 16 weeks the vast majority of patients have noted their Dysport and Botox treatments have completely worn off.

Botox	Dysport	Daxxify
\$21.88	\$20	\$19.50

Cost per week estimating that results have **completely** worn off by 16 weeks for Botox and Dysport, and 20 weeks for Daxxify, calculated for the glabellar frown lines (between the eyebrows). At these prices Daxxify will likely be chosen more frequently than the shorter lasting alternatives.

Promising new vaccine for advanced melanoma



A new experimental mRNA melanoma vaccine from Moderna, used in combination with Keytruda (Merck) for patients with advanced (stage 3 and 4) melanoma, cut the risk of recurrence or death in half, compared to Keytruda treatment without the vaccine. This finding offers great hope for people with advanced melanoma. The US Food and Drug Administration is fast-tracking the review for approval of this experimental treatment, and it may get approval for general use by 2025.

The Moderna melanoma vaccine uses the same messenger RNA (mRNA) technology that proved effective against Covid-19. This melanoma vaccine and Keytruda help the patient's immune system kill off the melanoma cancer cells. This type cancer vaccine may offer hope to treating other forms of cancer. Moderna has recently announced phase 3 studies using its mRNA vaccine technology for treating lung cancer and other companies are similarly working towards other cancer vaccines.

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/merck-moderna-vaccine-skin-cancer-melanoma/>

Ellacor- a new way to improve sagging skin & wrinkles



The Ellacor device uses hollow needles that remove up to 8% of the sagging or wrinkled skin in a given area with very small cores. The skin heals with little risk of scarring resulting in a tighter, smoother appearance. The procedure is done with local anesthesia and takes about 30 minutes for most treatments. Several treatments spaced over time may be required for best results. Patient should expect one to two weeks down time for the skin to heal with some bleeding, bruising and swelling. It is a relatively new procedure and can lead to some short term darkening of the skin, particularly in darker pigmented individuals. I am not offering this treatment at this time. For more information see: <https://ellacor.com/faqs/>

Risks of long term use of proton-pump inhibitors



Proton Pump Inhibitors (omeprazole, esomeprazole, lansoprazole, dexlansoprazole, pantoprazole and rabeprazole), also known as PPIs, are often prescribed to treat gastric acid-related conditions such as gastritis, esophagitis, and stomach ulcers. A number of medical articles have identified possible risks of long term treatment with these medications.

These possible risks include an increased risk of some infections and nutrient deficiencies (low magnesium, calcium, iron, potassium and vitamin B12 levels). There have been some associations that have suggested, but not definitively linked PPI long term use to kidney disease, heart disease, stroke, increased risk of some cancers, bone fractures and dementia.

Clinicians and patients should be aware of the possible adverse effects of taking proton pump inhibitors for an extended period of time and it seems reasonable for patients taking proton pump inhibitors for long-term to be monitored for magnesium, iron and vitamin B12 levels, based on our current knowledge, particularly in the elderly, and especially if a patient exhibits signs or symptoms of a deficiency (e.g., hair loss, itching or anemia can be signs of iron deficiency; constipation, muscle cramps and headache can result from magnesium deficiency; feeling tired or numbness or tingling in hands or feet can indicate vitamin B12 deficiency).

You should talk to your primary care provider and any other provider that is prescribing your proton-pump inhibitor. **Do not stop your PPI without first talking to your prescribing health care provider and be aware that your stomach may actually produce more acid when suddenly stopping a PPI. If you have more severe reflux esophagitis the benefit of staying on the medication can decrease the risk of developing life-threatening esophageal cancer.** Your health care provider can assess your risk and need for PPI treatment and may recommend other measures that may lessen the need of proton pump inhibitor treatment such as:

- 1) Use of other non-PPI medications like ranitidine, cimetidine and famotidine
- 2) Weight loss, if overweight
- 3) Stop use of tobacco products
- 4) Avoid eating 3 hours before bedtime
- 5) Avoid eating foods that increase stomach acid and reflux (e.g., fatty foods, tomato sauce, peppermint, carbonated beverages, alcoholic beverages, spicy food, citrus, chocolate)
- 6) Follow a GERD diet <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/gerd-diet-foods-that-help-with-acid-reflux-heartburn>
- 7) Raise the head of the bed
- 8) Take your PPI 30 to 60 minutes before a meal instead of at bedtime
- 9) Take the lowest effective PPI dose and stop taking the PPI when your prescribing physician feels that it is no longer needed

References: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10248387/>
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK557385/>