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Life | BY JOHN INTINI



# LOVE IN THE TIME OF BOTOX

Increasingly, couples are getting altered for the altar

Genetic enhancement procedures are on rise and new couples pre-nup-to-do fix

says Carruthers. "And it's not only brides. Last week I had a mother of a bride come in, joking that she wanted to look better than the mother of the groom."

Determined to be the most gorgeous of grooms for their wedding last December, Toronto-based assistant managers Rob Serrellish and Gong McFinn opted for Botox injections to smooth out worry lines on their 33-year-old foreheads and eyes (McFinn also had Botox injections to eliminate frown lines around his mouth). "We're young, but many people start getting wrinkles in their early 30s," says McFinn, whose nuptials will be featured this spring on Global's new reality series, *My Fabulous Gay Wedding*. "Brides spend thousands on their gowns, so what's wrong with doing this?"

Many clients going for pre-nup fix-ups are older marrieds, some of them exchanging vows for the second or third time. "We're doing tons of tummy tucks and breast work on those heading into a second marriage," says Dr. Marc DuPéré, a Toronto cosmetic plastic surgeon for whom pre-wedding treatments amount to five per cent of his business (in fact, he's attended the weddings of those clients). "I did a the yummy matrimony procedure, since many in this group have already had kids." One of DuPéré's patients, a 39-year-old woman from suburban Toron- to who requested anonymity, got married for the second time last July in Europe. But not before getting a breast lift, a tummy tuck, liposuction on her thighs and lip injections. "I'm the honeymoon, a Mediterranean cruise. I put on the smallest bikini I could find," boasts the mother of two sons in their mid-30s. "It was well worth the little bit of pain after surgery and every penny it cost."

Vanity has long been a welcome guest at weddings—it's not uncommon for brides to have a makeup artist and hairstylist on the big day. But thanks in large part to a slew of cosmetic surgery reality TV shows in recent years, plastic surgery now abounds at the altar. "I watch *The Contender* and see it," says Serrellish, referring to the fix series in which contestants are completely altered by cosmetic surgery. "Whether those shows are the right or wrong message, the thing is people feel better about themselves, getting the work done." Till death do us part, at least, till the Botox runs out.

**BEFORE** discovering Botox, Marc Roy's best defence against his hyperactive sweat glands was three undershirts. They worked to a point, but after the public relations consultant got engaged, he was prepared to take bolder measures—partly because he didn't want the added bulk under his wedding tux. "A friend told me he'd had Botox injections in his forehead to stop excessive sweating and thought it might help me," says Roy, 30, who paid \$1,000 for injections in his temples about four weeks before getting hitched in Montreal last May. "My skin was very dry again a while afterwards. And every morning I awoke all night without any worries."

Botox, mainly for smoothing out wrinkles, is one of many treatments from the realm of cosmetic enhancement—including breast implants, liposuction, lip augmentation, rhinoplasty and eyelid lifts—being added to an increasing number of couples' pre-wedding to-do lists. There are no hard

numbers, but anecdotal evidence suggests more and more people, hoping to be picture-perfect on their big day, are resorting to what were once considered extreme measures. In Las Vegas—where else?—Botox bachelorette parties are not uncommon.

**'WE'RE** doing tons of tummy tucks and breast work on those heading into a second marriage,' says one surgeon

Dr. Jean Carruthers, a cosmetic surgeon in Vancouver, says weddings are often a catalyst for people who'd already been thinking about doing something. Most clients opt for Botox or other injections to temporarily get rid of worry lines. "A bride doesn't want to look angry in her wedding photos."