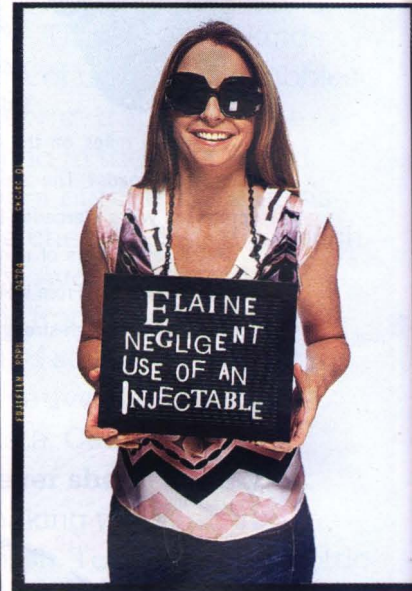


# Crimes against beauty

What happens when SELF's beauty editors (who have a combined 26 years of experience) don't follow their own look-good advice? Well, the results can be ugly! Now they're coming clean about their offenses in the hopes that it will keep you out of trouble.



## "I had too much of a good thing."

**Elaine D'Farley, beauty director**

I'm not *anti* aging; I'm into aging well. So when doctors I meet offer to, say, inject my butt fat into my face to "fix" it, I refuse. After all, I'm not broken. But for me, Botox falls in the aging-well category. It seems less extreme than a lot of other cosmetic measures. Remember when people whispered, "Does she or doesn't she?" about hair color? Today that's Botox, and I think, like dye, if used right, it can make you look subtly fresher, not fake.

My dermatologist, **David Colbert, M.D.**, in New York City, is conservative with Botox, giving me just a bit in my brow, where it looks natural. And when I'm tempted by other doctors' suggestions and ask him to inject more, he says no. He told me not to get Botox under my eyes because they wouldn't move when I smiled. I appreciate his honesty and that he looks good for being in his 30s, 40s, whatever it is. He's not anti his age either.

But one morning I gave in to temptation. I thought I'd be with a group of editors meeting a plastic surgeon at a press event but found myself having a one-on-one consultation. The surgeon pointed out my hooded eyes, falling brow, sagging chin. He then described all the easy things he could do for me. I knew better than to believe a brow-lift was easy, but I said yes to the Botox—I

was too consumed with worrying about my hooded eyes to think about consequences. Moments later, Dr. Shot was injecting. And injecting more. I squirmed, but once I commit to letting an expert do his thing, I don't feel as if I can extricate myself. I don't want to offend the doctor or imply I know more than he does. Afterward, I crept to the elevator holding ice packs to my swollen face.

**It wasn't until the next week** (Botox can take up to 14 days to fully kick in) that, looking in the mirror, I froze. Literally. Nothing moved! Not my brow, my forehead or anywhere around my eyes. My under-eye circles were actually *more* pronounced, like dark muddy puddles trapped under ice. Instead of many expressions, I had one: blasé. I looked as if I'd had work done—not good for an editor at a magazine whose credo is "Be beautiful from the inside out." I was so self-conscious, I ended up telling everyone what had happened. It took a few months before people started saying how exhausted I looked. And I was relieved to hear it. My old face was coming back!

My advice, which I vow to follow, is stick to one doctor you trust, whose goal for you matches your own. Mine is subtlety. I want my husband to say, "You look gorgeous!" Not "You look..." and struggle to find a word. Then I won't need to confess what I did; I can simply say thanks and enjoy the compliment. >>