

An alternative to Botox hits the market

•DYSPORT, FROM 1E

rival, Botox, also treats actors, sports figures and business executives. About 20 percent of her patients are men.

Are patients put off by the stern "black box" warning the FDA is requiring in the packaging — a black-bordered paragraph that warns about swallowing and breathing problems that can be life-threatening, even fatal?

"I'm not concerned," Davis said. "I really studied this during the trials. And I trust the University of Miami."

To be sure, the FDA goes on to say it "has not identified any definitive serious adverse event reports when the product is used cosmetically."

Dr. Peter Lurie, director of health research for the public interest group Public Citizen, whose petition persuaded the FDA to issue the warning, says the chief danger from Botox products is in "off-label" use not studied by the FDA. Some doctors have tried it, for example, to relieve muscle spasms in cerebral palsy patients with adverse results, Lurie says.

Another serious problem occurred in 2004 when an Oakland Park doctor injected himself and three others with a too-pure form of botulinum toxin — far stronger than the cosmetic type. All four became paralyzed and slipped into comas from bot-



SMOOTH OPERATION: Laurie Kaye Davis is injected with Dysport at Dr. Leslie Baumann's offices at the University of Miami's Cosmetic and Research Institute.

CHARLES TRAINOR JR./MIAMI HERALD STAFF

ulism poisoning, although they later recovered.

Both Dysport, made by Ipsen Biopharm of the United Kingdom and distrib-

uted by Medicis, of Scottsdale, Ariz., and Botox, made by Allergan of Irvine, Calif., must carry the black-box warning.

Baumann says Dysport, which won FDA approval in April, and Botox, which has been on the market since 2000, are fairly similar in

effect. But Botox needs seven to 10 days to work, she says, while Dysport does its smoothing thing in two to three days. She believes Dys-

Warning lable

This "black box" warning must appear on every box of Dysport and other botox products:

Distant Spread of Toxin

Effect: The effects of Dysport and all botulinum toxin products may spread from the area of injection to produce symptoms consistent with botulinum toxin effects. These symptoms have been reported hours to weeks after injection. Swallowing and breathing difficulties can be life-threatening and there have been reports of death. The risk of symptoms is probably greatest in children treated for spasticity, but symptoms can also occur in adults, particularly in those patients who have underlying conditions that would predispose them to these symptoms.

port will last four to six weeks longer than the six-month span of Botox.

Price competition should be a plus, too: Three frown-line injections of Botox is \$350, Baumann says, and Dysport should be about 25 percent less.

Patient Davis says she may try to persuade her husband, Steve, 53, a Miami Beach lawyer, to try Dysport.

"I got him to use face creams," she said. "But I don't know how much of a metrosexual I can make him."