

The search for eternal youth... in a needle

LOOK at my crow's feet," says Tony Sacco, moving in close to show the feathery lines around his dark brown eyes.

"I don't like looking older."

Neither, it would appear, do the 275 people who gathered in the Fairmont Hotel last night for Winnipeg's first cosmetic enhancement/anti-aging expo.

Being male and 31 made Sacco something of an oddity at this event, but when they needed a volunteer for the Botox demonstration, the bar security manager jumped at the chance.

"The better you look, the better you feel," he said prior to his on-stage injection of the wrinkle-relaxing toxin, North America's No. 1 cosmetic treatment.

That seemed to be the catchphrase at this gathering, sponsored by Toronto-based Medicaid — Canada's first credit-card company for cosmetic enhancements — and attended mostly by women in their 30s and 40s.

Thirteen exhibitors — including some of Winnipeg's busiest plastic surgeons and dermatologists — offered up information on age-defying products and procedures ranging from breast, hair and dental implants to vein and hair removal to non-surgical facelifts.

How many of last night's visitors applied for cosmetic-enhancement credit cards — financing approved in 24 hours — remains to be seen, as the crowd appeared to be a mix of curious and committed.

"I have this really bad frown line that makes me look like my mother," said one 41-year-old woman who declined to be named and who added she was just "seeing what's out there."

Terrie Abrey, on the other hand, is ready to rage against age — but no surgery for her.

"I'd already decided that I'd have something done when I turned 45," says Abrey, who is 51. "I started to show lines and I thought I was showing prematurely."

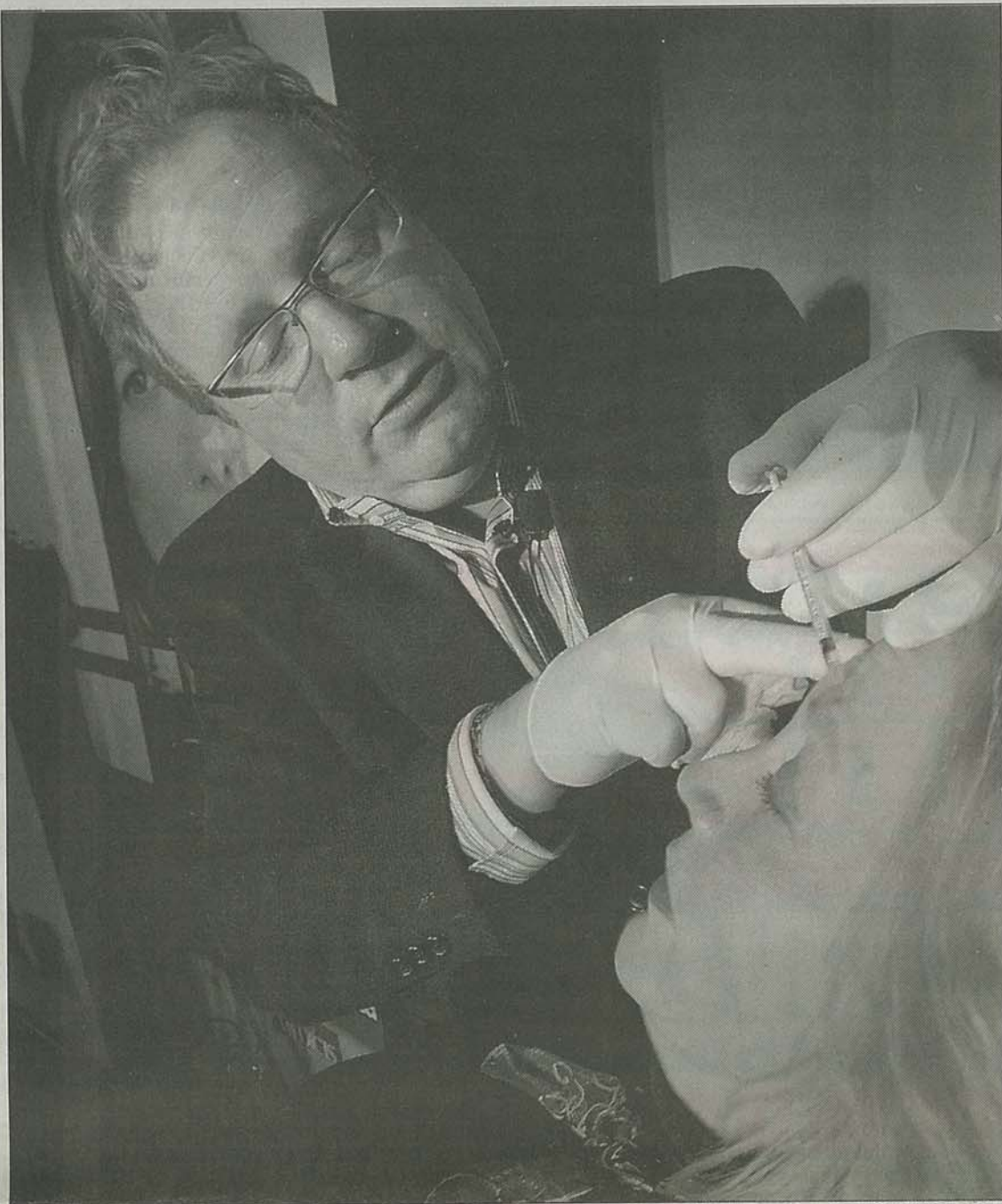
Abrey says that while she's hesitant about Botox — "I don't think paralyzing anything is good" — she's open to injectable fillers, such as Restylane. Made from a polysaccharide found in the human body, Restylane will plump out facial creases for up to 12 months — for between \$250 and \$800.



Carolin Vesely

'The better you look, the better you feel'

—Tony Sacco,



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Dermatologist Dr. Earl Minuk injects Botox into Sheila Johnson, 60, at anti-aging expo last night.

No boob jobs for Abrey, however. "Oh, god, no!" she says. "If you're going to worry about anything, worry about what shows."

But for those women ready to launch a full-frontal attack on gravity, Winnipeg cosmetic surgeon Dr. Anthony Lockwood had some good news regarding trends in breast-augmentation.

"Cohesive gel implants," he said during a presentation, "are more like gummy bears. Cohesive gel has a memory, so it functions much like a mannequin in a store window. It keeps its shape."

Botox, he added, can also lift sagging breasts when injected into the pectoral muscles.

Jennifer Lavergne says she came to the show because she's interested in getting a tummy tuck, lip injection and "possibly breast augmentation."

Lavergne is only 20, but according to Lockwood, she's just a few years away from, ahem, starting to show her age.

"It's not just gravity," Lockwood says in describ-

ing how the face ages. "At age 24, the bones of your eye socket begin to shrink and move backward. You lose the height of your cheekbones vertically and you lose fat in your brow and around the eye, and your eye starts to hollow.

"There's also change in the ligaments in the face. We start making new fat in the chin and under the jowls."

Lockwood says the Featherlift non-surgical facelift — a suspension technique that uses Velcro-like pieces of fishing line threaded under the skin with a needle — can be done during your lunch hour, although it may take longer if you're over 45. It runs around \$2,000.

Lips too thin when you smile?

Dermatologist Earl Minuk can plump them up in minutes.

As he said during his presentation on injectable fillers and Botox: "We can give you everything from Goldie Hawn in the *First Wives Club* to a subtle improvement."

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