



FILLING AGENTS FOR WRINKLE IMPROVEMENT, FACIAL VOLUME RESTORATION, AND LIP AUGMENTATION

Many people develop facial wrinkles and volume loss over time. Specifically, the skin ages by losing its underlying support structure, a condition known as soft tissue atrophy. Soft tissue atrophy is one of the most prominent signs of the aging face. There are a number of options available for the treatment of atrophy and they are collectively referred to as soft tissue augmentation. The most common areas affected by soft tissue atrophy, and the resulting aged appearance, are the lips, chin, cheeks, under the eyes, corners of the mouth, nasolabial folds (area between the nose and the side of the mouth), and frown lines (area between the corners of the mouth and the chin). The ideal technique for soft tissue augmentation is a natural feeling, long lasting, and easy to perform procedure. The most common filling agents utilized today for soft tissue augmentation are hyaluronic acid and collagen.

What is Hyaluronic Acid?

Hyaluronic Acid is a natural substance that already exists in the human body and is used to provide volume and fullness to the skin. It is found in the skin, cartilage, joints, and eyes. In the skin tissue, hyaluronic acid fills the space between collagen and elastin fibers. The role of hyaluronic acid in skin is to deliver nutrients, hydrate the skin by holding in water, and to act as a cushioning agent. By attracting and retaining water like a sponge, hyaluronic acid increases the skin's density and volume. Hyaluronic acid injections are most commonly used to treat the wrinkles or folds that look like parentheses along the side of the nose and mouth. They are also especially effective when used to fill in and augment the lips, restore volume to the cheeks, improve acne scars, or correct the sad expression that appears at the corners of the mouth with advanced age. These filling agents may also be used to improve the appearance of the lines that develop between the eyebrows.

What is Juvederm™?

Juvederm Ultra™ and **Juvederm Ultra Plus™** are the newest FDA-approved hyaluronic acid dermal fillers. These fillers are fully biocompatible with human hyaluronic acid. They are sterile, clear, non-animal, colorless gels produced through Hylacross technology which creates a high degree of cross linking and a smooth gel consistency.

Juvederm™ treatments restore the volume and contour of the lips, facial folds, and wrinkles to achieve a smooth, natural, beautiful appearance. The results after treatment with **Juvederm™** usually last for six months to twelve months.

What is Restylane™?

Restylane™ is also a sterile, clear, non-animal, colorless dermal (skin) filler. Treatment with **Restylane™** beautifully corrects facial folds and superbly augments the volume and clarity of the lips. The results after **Restylane™** treatment generally last for six months. **Perlane™** is a new FDA-approved filler that is very similar to **Restylane™**. This filling agent is used to correct deeper facial folds.

What is Collagen?

Collagen, a natural substance that is present in skin, can help eliminate some of the facial wrinkles and lines that are an inevitable part of aging. It is found throughout the body in muscle, tendon, and bone. Fibers of collagen are woven together, like threads in fabric, to form a framework into which new cells can grow.

Cosmoderm^a and **Cosmoplast^a** are FDA-approved dermal fillers made from human derived collagen. These fillers are derived from the same cell source that physicians have been using for years in the treatment of burns and other skin wounds.

What is the procedure like?

Treatment with hyaluronic acid or collagen is safe, effective, and usually takes about 20 to 30 minutes. Results can last for six months or longer with hyaluronic acid and up to four months with collagen. Topical creams and ice compresses will be used for anesthesia. Some patients find it useful to have anesthesia injected for improved comfort, particularly for lip treatments. There may be bruising and a bit of swelling after the procedure. These side effects usually resolve in a few days. For most patients, these side effects are minimal and they are able to resume normal daily activities the same day as the procedure.