

# SKIN Matters



Skin Enhancement Information from Dr. Christine Helinski

## The New Age of Dermal Fillers

Dermal fillers have been used in various forms for over 25 years. Fat injections taken from unwanted fat deposits in one's own body are historically the oldest available filler. The modern era began with the FDA approval of Zyderm or bovine collagen in 1981. Zyderm was the most frequently used filler until 2003. The disadvantage of collagen though, is the fact that it is derived from animals and therefore can cause an allergic reaction. Collagen also only lasts up to three to four months. Testing and development of other fillers in Europe and Asia began in the 1990's. Since this time, fillers have been developed from different source materials including bovine, porcine, human, avian and bio-engineered products.

Today, physicians and patients are looking for non-animal, longer lasting fillers that provide natural correction without the risk of long term side effects. Many cosmetic physicians now choose hyaluronic-based fillers such as Restylane, Captique and Juvederm. Hyaluronic acid is a substance that is found in soft tissue. It gives volume and fullness to the skin. These types of fillers have advantages over fat and collagen injections because they are not derived from animals and therefore they are longer lasting and have less chance of side effects.

The arrival of Q-Med's Restylane opened up a whole new era in dermal enhancement. The colorless gel is injected into a wrinkle or skin fold in tiny amounts with a very fine needle. It maintains its shape using the body's own moisture. Restylane has been used to shape facial contours, smooth wrinkles or sculpt lips. What results is a healthy, more youthful and fuller appearance. Since 1996, over one million individuals have received Restylane injections worldwide. Juvederm, another hyaluronic acid-based filler has recently been approved by the FDA. It lasts even longer than Restylane due to its molecular structure.

Fillers can be divided into those which are temporary or permanent. In general, temporary fillers like Restylane and Juvederm last from 6 to 9 months and are biodegradable i.e. absorbed and ultimately excreted by the body. The duration of permanent fillers such as Artecoll and Radiesse can last from months to years. Many factors ultimately determine how long a filler material will remain such as the patient's age, the depth of the wrinkle and how much product is injected. Some permanent fillers both restore volume and stimulate collagen to deposit at the site of injection. The down side of using permanent fillers is the potential to develop 'granulomas' or lumps in the treated area over time.

Cosmetic fillers are an essential tool to restore volume and symmetry to the entire face. In combination with other treatments such as BOTOX, pulsed light, laser peels, microdermabrasion and skin care products, dermal fillers enhance aesthetic results.

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