Hyaluronic Facial Filler

INFORMATION & TREATMENT INSTRUCTIONS

Hyaluronic acid is naturally present in the skin as part of collagen and elastin and is a powerful volumizing and moisturizing agent. The amount and quality of hyaluronic acid in the skin and underlying soft tissue decreases with age and along with other factors such as sun exposure, social habits, bone loss, genetics and sleep positions can cause the skin to lose elasticity and along with a decrease in soft tissue volume, forming wrinkles or folds.

The hyaluronic acid in facial fillers is made from sterile bacterial fermentation and so is much less likely to cause the adverse reactions of earlier animal-based fillers. Their reduced protein and bacterial endotoxin levels result in less hypersensitivity reactions and swelling.

The goal of facial filler is to replace or volume loss, smooth out wrinkles or enhance your own features to give a natural look. Everyone has unique facial features and asymmetry. Filler is used to enhance your own natural look not to make you look “perfect” or perfectly even. Facial fillers can be used around the eyes, nose or mouth, or to lift deflated cheeks. Cheek volume loss can lead to sagging that accentuates folds around the nose and mouth and can make under eye circles and hollowness prominent. Filling the cheek area maintains a natural, pleasing and youthful shape to the face leading to improvements in the folds or wrinkles around the nose and mouth and under-eye issues. Filler can give volume and definition to lips with very natural results. Fillers can last 6 to 12 months on average and long-acting filler can last 12-18 months or longer. Having filler treatments will stimulate your own collagen and elastin production allowing longer time between treatments. Over time your own enzymes called hyaluronidases that naturally remodel your own collagen and elastin will break down the facial filler. **Results vary between individuals. Some people exceed our expectations and some people respond below expectations. Although good results are expected, with the focus on improvement and not perfection, every person is unique and it is impossible to guarantee results.**

Facial fillers come in a wide range of products specifically designed for different areas of the face and body. Fine lines around the eyes and mouth and crepy skin on the face, neck and chest can be treated with fine line filler using a very superficial technique to get the filler into the very superficial layers of the skin. Using some topical anesthetic before treatment can minimize or remove any discomfort for these treatments. Most fillers now contain local anesthetic in the syringe instantly relieving discomfort. (Let us know if you have an allergy to local anesthetic because facial filler can be ordered without local anesthetic.)
softening of folds around the nose and mouth and chin creases are done with filler that is more dense and cross-linked. *With the newer technique of using a cannula, less discomfort, bruising and risks of side effects area expected making treatment truly a no downtime experience.* When treating sensitive areas such as the lips, local anesthetic or nerve blocks may be used to anesthetize the area prior to treatment. Complimentary skincare consults are recommended for colour matching so that you may apply a medical grade mineral foundation immediately after treatment. Other mineral make up may only contain 15% minerals so may not have the antibacterial protection or anti-inflammatory effect of pure mineral make up. *We recommend only our mineral foundation immediately after treatment for this reason.*

Other options for treating loss of facial volume or wrinkles include *Botulinum Toxin A (Botox™)* injections for wrinkle prevention, *Radiofrequency* skin tightening, *skin resurfacing* with radiofrequency (Fractora) or laser (Ultrapulse CO₂) or *surgery/fat grafting* for wrinkles and volume loss. As this is an elective procedure, *not having a treatment* is also an option. *Medical grade skin care* products can help to reverse some of the skin damage that has built up over the years and treat prevent fine lines and wrinkles. Combining treatments will enhance and prolong results, for example Botulinum Toxin A and hyaluronic filler in lips will produce full smooth lips. Adding medical grade skin care to any filler treatment will help to maximize and lengthen results. There may be other options not listed.

Facial fillers are *not recommended* if you are breastfeeding or pregnant, have active infection at the site or are soon having skin resurfacing or skin tightening. If you have had facial implants or previous permanent or semi-permanent filler treatments these may be associated with an increase risk of infection or granuloma formation (tender inflamed lumps in the previously treated areas) and please inform the physician and staff. If you have a bleeding disorder or are on blood thinners you may be more prone to bleeding and bruising. Also dermal fillers are not recommended if you have unrealistic expectations as they are meant to enhance what you already have and not give you someone else’s features nor are they meant to last indefinitely.

Smoking or second hand smoke can interfere with tissue healing and increase risk of infection. It also increases the number of free radicals in your skin that destroy collagen and may speed up your filler breakdown. Excessive exercising can also enhance filler breakdown.

**Injection-related side effects can include:**

- **bleeding and bruising** from damage to blood vessels, nerves and soft tissue and may be more common in the lower face. Aspirin, anti-inflammatories, anti-platelet medications, anticoagulants, vitamin E, ginkgo biloba, green tea and other herbs may increase bleeding or bruising so avoid these medications prior to treatment. Pre- and post-treatment icing is used to minimize this side effect. Cannula technique also reduces this side effect significantly. Light-based therapy may be used to treat bruising.

- **Swelling, redness and needle marks** are common after injections and may take a few hours to a week to resolve.

- **cold sores** can be triggered especially if you have a history of cold sores *in the treatment area* but rarely if you don’t have a history of having cold sores. *Antiviral medication can be prescribed to limit or prevent them.*

- **discomfort** from the needle is expected and short-lived and less so with cannula. You may hear or feel the needle touching your bone with cheek enhancement treatments.

- **damage to nerves.** If a nerve is touched an immediate burning sensation or sharp discomfort may be felt, with needle repositioning this can be mitigated but could result in some short term or long lasting numbness and is less common with the use of cannula.
• **infection.** You may be at a slightly higher risk if you have had permanent implants or permanent filler treatments or a permanent implant elsewhere (eg heart valve).

**Filler-related side effects can include:**

- **discomfort** from the presence of the filler that can feel like a dull ache in the treatment area when the anesthetic has worn off if anesthetic was used (or in the filler).
- **asymmetry.** Faces are naturally asymmetrical. It may not be possible or desirable to achieve symmetry. The focus is on improvement rather than perfection.
- **skin sensitivity and allergic reactions** such as rashes or itching or even anaphylaxis (severe allergic reactions). These are less common to extremely rare with the newer fillers because of very low protein content. The skin is cleaned with alcohol or chlorhexidine and these may also cause some itching, rash or reaction. **If you have an allergy to lidocaine or history of anaphylaxis inform the clinician, filler without lidocaine may have to be ordered.**
- **visible tissue filler** in treated areas with very thin skin such as around the eye or lip or with meso-hydration that can last for a few days on the face or up to 4 to 7 days on the body. Gentle massage may hasten resolution of any irregularities.
- **nodules, which** are palpable lumps of filler under the skin, these will soften over a short time, and rarely do they remain.
- **skin necrosis or break down or blindness** is extremely rare but can occur if an artery is blocked during the injection. If necrosis occurs there may be significant scarring. The symptoms would include skin blanching or colour change and pain out of proportion to what is expected. It would develop immediately if it was due to a blocked artery due to injection into the artery or may be delayed if it is due to compression of an artery from overlying filler. Pain and vision loss could be due to blockage of an artery leading to the arteries that supply the eye. There may be treatment to minimize damage but side effects could be permanent.
- **granuloma** (tender or non-tender and possibly red lump) formation may occur over time as an inflammatory response to the hyaluronic gel in the tissue.
- **Tindall effect** which is a slight bluish discolouration in the skin overlying the filler and may occur over time. It is uncommon to rare. If it develops it can be permanent.

Fortunately the most common side effects are some pinpoint bleeding and possibly slight bruising. Results are immediate and satisfying. The combination of minimal side effects and great results has made dermal fillers one of the most popular non-surgical cosmetic treatments worldwide.

**Prior to the procedure you should:**

- Ensure that you have reviewed this information sheet and that you have had enough opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to your complete satisfaction.
- Ensure that you have signed the consent form.
- have a skincare and mineral cosmetic make up consult (complementary) for use after treatment. Mineral make up can be applied immediately after treatment.
- Pre-ice the treatment areas
- Inform the doctor if you have any important upcoming events because bruising is a possibility after treatment.
- Confirm your treatment budget with the doctor.
After your treatment:

- avoid exercising for the rest of the day.
- avoid very hot or cold drinks or eating if you have had a dental block until it has worn off
- do not lie facedown for 24 hours. Sleep on your back that night by propping pillows at your sides.
- you may notice a pattern of small raised bumps if meso-hydration technique was used around the eyes, mouth and chest. You may massage these to help them absorb. Prolonged icing is not required.
- some treatments may require rubbing or massaging the area treated while other treatments may not. Ask your clinician which is recommended for you.
- you may gently wash your face the day of treatment and can wear medical-grade mineral make up immediately after your treatment. **We recommend a complementary skin care consults prior to your treatment** with one of our estheticians to be colour-matched for a mineral foundation. Do not wear non-mineral make up after treatment as this may increase risk of infection.
- use ice to decrease swelling and pain. If the discomfort is excessive contact the clinic immediately. Take ibuprofen or acetaminophen for any minor discomfort.
- ask the doctor if you should wait before receiving other treatments.
- consider an effective medical-grade skincare plan if you are going to invest in yourself with dermal fillers. A good skincare regimen can readily improve your skin tone and quality.
- please contact the clinic if you have any questions about your treatment or if you develop any of the above complications. No question is too trivial. **We are here to help you and want your experience to be a pleasant one.**

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