

Plump out your wrinkles with fillers

Fillers can be a gift for those of us who are bugged by gravity and the ageing process. Most fillers plump up creases temporarily but, unlike Botox, they won't prevent new lines appearing or getting deeper. Still, you can revive volume, smooth out skin and keep an active face. Some of you are already indulging – thank you to those ladies at our last w&h fashion show who invited me to “feel” their fillers! And, no, I couldn't tell they had them just by looking! Dr Mountford is enthusiastic: “Fillers are so good at creating an airbrushed effect, lifting, softening and rejuvenating features, but still very naturally so.”

+ WHAT ARE THEY BEST FOR?

Injected at different levels under the skin, they're good at replacing lost padding and lifting what appears to be sagging skin. “It's not sagging, as such,” says Dr Mountford. “It's more a redistribution and depletion of facial fat, which causes a harsh look, and that starts as much as eight years before the big drop!”

That harsh look is exactly the reason why more of us begin flirting with the needle. “Fillers can make a big difference,” says Frances Furlong, nurse practitioner in aesthetics at Skin Health Spa. “They can make your face change from negative to positive. You look

happier – and you can kiss all those ‘Cheer up, luv,’ comments goodbye.”

Botox may put the freeze on some lines, but the deeper kind respond best to fillers. Those between the brows, the marionette grooves around the mouth and, of course, those ultra-ageing nose-to-mouth lines. “Even deep crow's feet can be smoothed out, when Botox just isn't man enough for the job,” says Dr Mountford. But lips are the real filler success story. They help define, plump, reshape and smooth out smoker's lines. Carefully injected, they can lift the corners to give you a slightly smiley look.

+ **THE OUCH FACTOR:** Let's face it, needles hurt. Your doctor should apply dental block (anaesthetic cream) to minimize the discomfort – make sure of it! You may get swelling, tenderness and bruising for a few days, but that soon sorts itself out. There is a risk of reaction for about one in 10,000.

WORTH THE CASH? Depends on the pain threshold of your purse. Treatment can take ten to 30 minutes and gives instant results. Hyaluronic acid fillers are biodegradable and non-permanent, lasting for six to 12 months for nose-to-mouth lines and around six months for lips. Cost depends on amount used and treatment for lines starts at around £300.

ARE ALL FILLERS EQUAL?

One filler definitely doesn't fit all. The type used depends on your skin quality and the result you want to achieve. We would always opt for temporary fillers; permanents may seem tempting, but can cause a reaction and leave you with unwanted effects. Think Leslie Ash and you'll get the idea. So which temps?

+ **HYALURONIC ACID FILLERS** – mimic a substance that naturally occurs in the body. When injected into the skin, it binds to water to plump and fill. Which name? Restylane is the Rolls-Royce of fillers, first choice for just about every top-name practitioner. With a whole menu of highly focused variants, Restylane for wrinkles, Restylane Touch for fine lines, Restylane Perlane for deeper creases and Restylane Lip for filling and hydrating lips. (020) 7976 3290; www.restylane.co.uk. Other brands are Teosyl, Belotero, Juvéderm.

+ **COLLAGEN FILLERS** – once there were only collagen fillers and, yes, the collagen came from cows. We've moved on now, but they're still around, some therapists liking them for the soft finish they bring, especially to the lips. Which names? Zyderm (for very fine lines) and Zyplast (for deeper lines); both are cow-derived and you need skin tests to check for sensitivity. Evolence: pig-derived, with no need for skin-testing and which has some good research behind it, 01628-822222; www.evolence.com.



Real you makeover

Jane Curran, 47, woman&home Food Editor.

+ MAKEOVER MOTIVE:

“I wanted to get that filled look back in my face. I'm slim, but I lost lots of weight through the stress of a divorce – and so much seemed to go from my

face, which apparently rarely comes back, so it seemed I was stuck with the deep grooves between my eyes and from nose to mouth.”

+ **TREATMENT:** “I've had a trio of treatments: Botox between my brows and over my crow's feet; Restylane to fill the deep grooves from nose to mouth; and Restylane Vital in my cheek area to hydrate my very dry skin.”

+ **THE OUCH FACTOR:** “It does hurt, especially near the nose. I coped by breathing and putting myself in a different zone. Next day, my face felt stiff and rather like a pincushion, but 48 hours later I felt terrific and looked happier. I didn't want to look different, just me, but rested and well, which I definitely achieved.”

+ **RESULTS:** “For a little bit of pain you get an awful lot of gain. I'm much happier, more confident and I use a hell of a lot less make-up.”

+ Jane had her treatment with Dr Tracy Mountford, Cosmetic Skin Clinic, 01753-665206; www.cosmeticskinclinic.com. >>

BEFORE

