

Saving Face

***FOCUS* fills you in on the effectiveness of five trendy injectables.**

How many “miracle” creams have you applied that failed to stave off the premature signs of aging? Although you may be diligent about your skin-care regime—exfoliating, moisturizing and masking like clockwork—there’s a little nuisance called “time working against you.” Thankfully, several cosmetic solutions are available, with injectables being among the most popular. But because plastic doesn’t necessarily make perfect, *FOCUS* sought the counsel of Dr. Louis M. DeJoseph of Premier Image Cosmetic and Laser Surgery in Atlanta to fill you in on what’s new and what’s next.

Injectables vs. Fillers—what’s the difference?

“All fillers are injectables, but all injectables are not fillers,” DeJoseph says. He explains that while fillers do what their name implies, filling in areas behind wrinkles to give the skin a smoother appearance, injectables such as Botox relax facial expression muscles to achieve a similar effect. In addition to cosmetically enhancing one’s appearance, injectables also are effective in treating facial scars and deformities, and can be used to correct small imperfections on the nose by camouflaging a bump or turning up the tip. They also can act as a shock absorber when used in the soles of the feet, and can plump up thin and aging hands.

According to DeJoseph, the following injectables are among today’s most popular and “have an excellent safety record when administered by a certified cosmetic physician.” But while some of these products are being used in cutting-edge applications by today’s top plastic surgeons, not all uses are FDA-approved, he says. So before settling on a product and procedure, first consult with a reputable cosmetic facial surgeon or dermatologist.



KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Candidacy: Everyone is a candidate for injectables, which are “a great way of trying cosmetic improvement without the commitment to surgery,” DeJoseph says. “Age plays a factor in how and where an injectable is administered. When the skin loses some of its natural elasticity, fillers may reach a point of diminishing returns, and surgical tightening may be required.”

Discomfort: “‘No pain, no gain’ is not entirely true when it comes to beauty,” DeJoseph says, who explains that all injectable procedures are performed with a form of local anesthesia such as a numbing cream or dental block. Numbness wears off in approximately one hour.

Duration of results: On average, muscle relaxation from Dysport lasts roughly four months. The effects of hyaluronic acid fillers last approximately five to six months, while those from an Evolence injection last six to eight months. Expect results from a Radiesse treatment to last nine to 12 months. “The main factor that affects duration of results is the location of the injectable’s application,” DeJoseph says. “In general, fillers last longer [the] higher up on the face you go.”

Procedural length: Injections administered to the lip and eye areas take anywhere from 10 to 30 minutes.

Side effects: Mild bruising and swelling are common after-effects of injectables, but they are minimized with careful and skillful injection techniques. Prior to treatment, DeJoseph recommends patients do not consume blood-thinning items that increase bruising, such as aspirin, vitamins and fish oil. Applying ice to injected areas also helps minimize side effects.

For more information, you can contact Premier Image Cosmetic and Laser Surgery at 770.457.6303.

The Injectables

DYSPORT: This newly launched injectable—an acetylcholine release inhibitor derived from botulinum toxin—offers effects similar to its chief competitor, Botox, by acting as a neuromuscular blocking agent to soften the muscles that create prominent facial lines. It works well for frown lines in between the eyebrows, an area particularly susceptible to skin contraction and creasing. Dysport inhibits the muscle from folding and causing visible creasing. According to DeJoseph, if injected into lines around the eyes at an earlier age, Dysport can help to prevent future wrinkles.

EVOLENCE: This new product from Johnson & Johnson is an effective collagen filler that uses cutting-edge, cross-linking technology to treat mild to moderate nasolabial folding (skin folds that run from either side of the nose to the mouth) and marionette lines (around the chin). Unlike hyaluronic acid fillers, collagen ensures fast, long-lasting results with minimal swelling and bruising. The thick consistency of this product, however, makes it prone to lumping, so it is unsuitable for injections around the eyes or into the lips.

Hyaluronic Acid Fillers: The most common types of these fillers—Restylane, Perlane and Juvéderm—are competent smoothing agents used to fill hollow spots and lines as well as augment larger imperfections without surgery. “Restylane injected into the lips may last up to five or six months, while the same substance injected under the eyes to fill hollows may last a year or longer,” DeJoseph says.

Radiesse: This calcium-based, semipermanent filler creates a sort of infrastructure that allows collagen to build around it. It is a face-contouring agent used to fill facial lines, define the cheeks, refine the jaw line and, more recently, to plump up the backs of the hands. DeJoseph says a simple injection to this latter area can make the hands look fuller in only 15 minutes.

Sculptra: This collagen growth stimulant, made of poly-L-lactic acid and approved by the FDA for restoration and/or correction of facial fat loss, activates the skin’s natural collagen producers to smooth wrinkles and fill out hollow cheeks for a fuller, more youthful look. Different from traditional fillers that fill in facial lines, Sculptra reduces the appearance of fine lines by giving volume to soft tissue.

—Jennifer Thornton