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AESTHETIC SURGERY

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Filler Injections: Overview & Guide to Care Artefill, Belotero, Juvederm, Radiesse, Restylane Sculptra, Voluma

Introduction

Fillers are used to improve facial appearance, specifically lines, creases, wrinkles, and hollowness. In some cases, additional treatment options may be offered.

Filler Injections

You have chosen to undergo a filler injection procedure in order to achieve an overall sense of subjective harmony, where your inner self will now truly be reflected by your outer appearance. Congratulations on this decision! Dr. Gutowski and his staff will do everything possible to make your experience as smooth as possible. The goal of filler treatment is to improve the look of your skin by reducing the amount of wrinkling, which will lead to a more youthful and refreshed appearance.

Differences Between Botox, Dysport, Xeomin and Fillers

All injectable treatments are aimed at reducing the visibility of wrinkles in the face. However, they work differently to achieve this result. Wrinkles in the skin may be caused from the natural aging process and loss of collagen and structure in the skin, or they may be caused by muscle actions underneath the skin. Fillers work to fill in the wrinkles that are on your face all the time, whether you are moving your face or not. Botox, Dysport and Xeomin on the other hand, work to decrease the muscle actions underneath the skin, thereby reducing the amount of wrinkling. Fillers may also be used to add volume and fullness to the face, whereas Botox, Dysport and Xeomin cannot do this. Both injectable products have valuable uses and just need to be used accordingly. You may even require use of both products to optimally correct your problem.

What to Expect Before and During Your Procedure

Make sure that you avoid medications that thin your blood at least two weeks before procedure (this includes aspirin but Tylenol is allowed). On the day of your procedure, you will come to our office, meet our staff, and be seated comfortably in our procedure room. Our staff will do everything possible to ensure your comfort during your visit.

Dr. Gutowski will examine your face and discuss the plan with you. We may have to remove some of your make-up in preparation for the procedure, but you can reapply your make-up in our office once the procedure is completed. During the procedure, you may feel some pain from the injections, but it is generally a light pain and patients uniformly tolerate these injections quite well. Expect the procedure to last 10-30 minutes depending on how many areas of your face are being treated. Following the procedure, your surgeon may hold some pressure on your face or apply a light massage. It is possible to have some bruising following filler injections, though uncommon. We will do everything we can to prevent this from happening or treat it should we see it before you leave the office. You will be instructed on

holding cold compresses on your face following the procedure in order to minimize swelling and prevent bruising. You may even start this immediately in our office if you choose.

What to Expect After Filler Injections

Depending on the filler material used, you will begin to see the results from your procedure immediately or soon after the procedure. For most injectable filler products, you should notice an improvement in your wrinkles and facial appearance either by the time you leave the office or by the end of the first week. Some products, like Sculptra, may take longer. Discuss timing of expected results with Dr. Gutowski. If you haven't noticed a correction by 6 weeks, be sure to contact our office for further evaluation. Some fillers may require a touch-up after your first injection. You may have some redness of the skin around the injection sites for the first day – this is not an allergic reaction. You may also notice some very slight swelling that will subside by the first day or two. Though uncommon, you may have a small amount of bleeding from the injection sites and may develop bruising. If you notice this, hold pressure for fifteen minutes and apply cold compresses frequently for a couple of days. Bruising, if present, should not last beyond a week and usually resolves within a few days. In the vast majority of cases, you will leave the office with no changes in the skin whatsoever and without side effects. So rest easy and relish in your refreshed facial appearance as the filler rejuvenation begins to work!

Follow-up

Check with Dr. Gutowski regarding follow up. Your follow up schedule will depend on the type of filler product used. If there is any question, please call our office and speak with the secretary or the patient coordinator. Either of them can assist you in clarifying your follow-up schedule.

Although filler injections are well tolerated, you have invested time, courage, and money to go through with your procedure and we are here to help you. Though the general guidelines above are quite accurate most of the time, every patient has a different and unique post-procedure experience. Just keep in mind that Dr. Gutowski and his staff are now part of your team and will do everything to ensure an exceptional experience and exceptional results. Congratulations on your decision to experience a harmonious and natural new you!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How long does my filler treatment last?

There are many different types of filler products available, each with its own duration of action. Some fillers are temporary while others are permanent. In general, the temporary fillers last between 3 months and 2 years depending on the specific product. You will need to discuss this with Dr. Gutowski to develop a treatment plan that works for you.

Are fillers safe?

While any injectable treatment carries some risk, most filler products are very well tolerated and safe when used for cosmetic enhancement. There have been reports of bad results after filler treatments, but most fillers carry few risks.

Where should fillers be injected?

Filler injections can be used to treat wrinkles all over the face. Both shallow and deep wrinkles can be treated with cosmetic filler products. Filler products are also used extensively to add volume to the face, including the cheeks and lips to give you a more youthful appearance. Dr. Gutowski will provide you with a thorough evaluation and help you develop a treatment plan that is right for you.

What is the differences between Botox® and fillers?

Both of these injectable treatments are aimed at reducing the visibility of wrinkles in the face. However, they work differently to achieve this result. Wrinkles in the skin may be caused from the natural aging process and loss of collagen and structure in the skin, or they may be caused by muscle actions underneath the skin. Fillers work to fill in the wrinkles that are on your face all the time, whether you are moving your face or not. Botox® on the other hand, works to decrease the muscle actions underneath the skin, thereby reducing the amount of wrinkling. Fillers may also be used to add volume and fullness to the face, whereas Botox® cannot do this. Both injectable products have valuable uses and just need to be used accordingly. You may even require use of both products to optimally correct your problem.

What if I don't like the effects of my filler treatment?

If you have chosen a temporary filler treatment (the most common type of filler used), then the effects of the treatment will diminish and go away over time. In addition, some of the more common types of fillers (Restylane, Juvederm, Belotero, Voluma) can be treated with a second injection to make them go away much faster. However, if a permanent filler treatment is done, unsatisfactory results may be harder to correct and may require excision of the product with resulting scars.

What if I don't notice enough difference after my filler treatment?

Dr. Gutowski will evaluate the results of your filler treatment after 2 weeks (or 2 months for Sculptra treatments). If you find that there is not enough improvement, you can always have an additional treatment to supplement your results. Alternatively, Dr. Gutowski may recommend a Botox, Dysport, or Xeomin injection for active wrinkles.

I've read the term "off-label." What does that mean?

When injectable products are approved to be used in the United States, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) lists specific uses those products. Most injectable products have been "approved" to treat specific areas of the face, and lists these approved treatment areas on the product label. However, the principle effects of the product may be the same if used elsewhere on the face. When a product is used on an area of the face not specifically listed on the FDA package insert label, the use of the product is considered "off-label." For example, a filler may only be FDA approved to treat the folds extending from your nose to the mouth (nasolabial folds), resulting in a softened fold or wrinkle and improved facial appearance. However, injection of this same material on the chin or in the earlobe may achieve the same cosmetic effect, but has not been officially approved by the FDA for that purpose. It is acceptable for physicians to use products in an off-label manner in the United States, but you need to be informed and aware that the products are being used in this way.