

ASK THE EXPERT

FAT OR FICTION?

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SARASOTA PLASTIC SURGERY CENTER

ABOUT

Sarasota Plastic Surgery was founded in 1991 with the aim of continually pursuing excellence in plastic surgery.

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How have fat injections to the face improved the results of facelift surgeries?

Facial aging is a combination of stretching and sagging of the facial tissues as well as loss of the youthful fat volume in the face. Surgically moving lax facial skin uphill without addressing the facial volume loss may create surgical results that appear pulled and unnatural. Adding fat to volume-depleted areas of the face during surgery restores the volume loss and results in a more refreshed, natural appearance.

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How is fat added to the face?

Most middle-aged patients undergoing facelift surgery have some extra deposits of fat in the lower abdomen or hip areas that are useful sites to obtain fat for re-injection. The fat is harvested by gentle liposuction using a small instrument introduced through a puncture in the skin. The fat is processed and immediately re-injected into the face in micro-droplets that will survive without moving out of position.

How long do fat injections last?

Scientific studies demonstrate that approximately 70 percent of the fat cells that are injected survive. The 30 percent of cells that don't survive gradually disappear over the first three months. The remaining fat cells survive for the lifetime of the patient.

Do facial fat injections have any other benefits?

Clinical observations have shown that the facial skin overlying the fat injection sites can slowly improve in appearance, texture and sometimes pore size. This secondary benefit is thought to be due to the presence of adult stem cells that reside with the fat that is injected. More lab studies are ongoing to prove this theory.

Dr. Graham is board certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery. He has practiced in Sarasota for the past 29 years. He is the Immediate Past President of the Florida Society of Plastic Surgeons and the upcoming President of the Southeastern Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons.