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## **Dermal fillers**

### **Information for Patients**

#### **What are dermal fillers?**

Healthy looking skin needs moisture at every level. There is a naturally occurring compound in the skin called hyaluronic acid which holds onto water. Skin shape and volume is largely determined by the levels of hyaluronic acid which decreases with age. One way to treat wrinkles and lines in the face is to inject hyaluronic acid to replenish the levels and hydrate the skin. As a result skin volume and tone are increased and lines are reduced. Dermal fillers contain hyaluronic acid like that found naturally in the skin, no allergy tests are therefore required. Dermal fillers are a popular form of non-surgical treatment for the improvement of lines, folds and grooves e.g nasolabial fold and marionette lines, glabellar lines (frown lines), forehead wrinkles and "crow's feet". They can also be used for lip contouring and augmentation.

#### **What does the treatment involve?**

Treatment with dermal fillers can take as little as 15 minutes. The dentist will probably apply a topical anaesthetic cream to the area to be treated or if the lips are being treated they may inject some local anaesthetic to make the procedure more comfortable. Using a very fine needle, your dentist will inject the filler beneath the surface of the skin.

#### **What benefits will I see?**

Dermal fillers have a dramatic and immediate rejuvenating effect. After treatment you should notice a change in some of the facial signs of aging, including increased skin volume and smoothing of the facial contour, loss of skin wrinkling and deep lines. The results are not permanent but in most cases last for 6-9 months so repeat treatments will be required.

Dermal fillers are considered superior to surgery because;

- You can immediately resume normal activities
- Treatment is reversible within a few months as the product is broken down
- Risk of infection, scarring and discomfort are minimal.

#### **Are there any possible side effects?**

Reactions are usually temporary in nature and short-lived. Some patients experience redness and swelling which may be accompanied by temporary irritation or pain on application of pressure, after the injection. Rare cases of necrosis (localised tissue damage) in the glabellar (frown) area, abscesses, granuloma (skin nodules) and hypersensitivity have been recorded after injections of dermal fillers.

#### **Can the treatment fail or interact?**

A small percentage of patients experience no improvement at all following treatment. Certain medications such as aspirin or warfarin may increase bleeding and bruising at the site of injection. Patients should inform their dentist about all medications they are taking and any past medical history. Dermal fillers are contraindicated in patients who are pregnant or breast-feeding, have had recent treatment with other fillers in the last 6/12 months and laser and skin peels in the last 1-2 years, suffer from cold sores, highly allergic patients, patients with auto-immune diseases or those with keloids or hypertrophic scars.