

Dermal Fillers



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
PLASTIC SURGEONS®

What are Dermal Fillers?

Dermal fillers are substances that are used to restore volume, smooth wrinkles, and enhance facial contours. They are commonly used in cosmetic procedures to address signs of aging, such as loss of facial fullness and the development of fine lines and wrinkles. Dermal fillers are administered through injections into specific areas of the face, providing immediate results that can last for several months or longer, depending on the type of filler used.

Dermal fillers can be used to:

- Plump thin lips
- Enhance shallow contours
- Soften facial creases and wrinkles
- Improve the appearance of recessed scars

While not as involved as surgical cosmetic procedures, dermal augmentation is a medical procedure. You should do it for yourself, not to fulfill someone else's desires or to try to fit any sort of ideal image.

Dermal fillers are a good option if you are:

- Physically healthy
- Don't smoke
- Have a positive outlook and specific, but realistic goals in mind for the improvement of your appearance

What it won't do:

Dermal augmentation does not stop the aging process. If you wish to change the elements of your face, surgery such as a facelift, brow lift, or eye lift may be the answer. Non-surgical rejuvenation treatments such as dermal fillers cannot achieve the same results, but may help delay the time at which a facelift becomes appropriate.

Consultation & Preparation

The success and safety of your dermal augmentation procedure depends very much on your complete candidness during your consultation. You'll be asked a number of questions about your health, desires, and lifestyle.

Be prepared to discuss:

- Why you want the procedure, your expectations, and desired outcome
- Medical conditions, drug allergies, and medical treatments
- Use of current medications, vitamins, herbal supplements, alcohol, tobacco, and drugs
- Discuss any past treatment with dermal fillers, facial shaping or Botox® therapy, or other facial rejuvenation procedures

Your surgeon may also:

- Evaluate your general health status and any pre-existing health conditions or risk factors
- Discuss the options available to you for facial rejuvenation
- Examine and measure your face
- Take photographs for your medical record
- Discuss your options and recommend a course of treatment
- Discuss likely outcomes of dermal augmentation and any risks or potential complications

Types of Fillers

Hyaluronic Acid (HA) is a natural substrate of skin and is the primary ingredient in the majority of fillers used for patients. HA is manufactured with different viscosities and weights to allow for treatment of a broad range of crease reduction and volumizing needs.

It is well suited to plump cheeks, lips, and temples, in addition to filling facial creases such as nasolabial folds and marionette lines. It may also be appropriate for surface wrinkles and concave scars.

The results may last for as little as 6 months in the lips or up to more than 2 years in the cheeks, depending on dynamic activity of the injected area and which HA product is used.

Hydroxylapatite is a mineral-like compound found naturally in human bones, suspended in a gel-like formulation. It is the densest of facial fillers.

Polylactic Acid (PLLA) enhances facial volume through biological stimulation of collagen production in the face.

This product requires 3-4 treatments, spaced at least 6 weeks apart, with results lasting over 2 years.

This product provides more global volume in the face for more significant thinning and/or aging in the face.

A note about the FDA and dermal fillers: The U.S. Food and Drug Administration reviews and approves pharmaceutical fillers in the same manner as medical devices. However, some fillers may be used on an off-label basis, meaning they are approved medical treatments, but not directly reviewed for a specific application.

The options discussed in this brochure are among the current fillers preferred by plastic surgeons. Some are available for general use, while others are not; regulatory status may be subject to change.

Fat harvested from your body can be transferred to the face to restore and/or enhance facial fullness, fill creases and to build up shallow contours.

Fat injection requires a more extensive procedure than other dermal fillers because it uses surgical liposuction techniques to extract the fat prior to injection.

Duration of results may last a lifetime, allowing for absorption of a fraction of the fat injected.



The Procedure

Step 1

Medications are administered for your comfort during the surgical procedure. The choices include intravenous sedation and general anesthesia. Your doctor will recommend the best choice for you.

Step 2

Strategic points on your face may be marked as guides to the appropriate injection sites for the filler.

Step 3

The injection sites will be cleansed with an antibacterial agent and icing or a topical numbing agent may be offered to make more sensitive patients comfortable. In some cases, the filler itself will contain an anesthetic agent. In other cases, local anesthetic may be administered to the treatment site.

Step 4

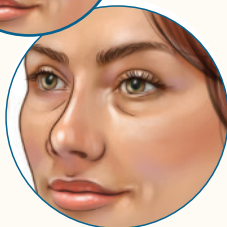
Injection takes only a few seconds per site and a few minutes for a course of treatment. The filler will either be injected with a needle or a cannula based on the practitioner's preference and site injected.

Step 5

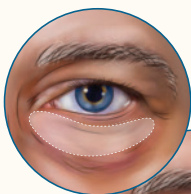
Following injection, any markings will be cleansed and icing may be offered to alleviate any temporary, minor discomfort. Makeup may be carefully re-applied so long as care is taken not to apply pressure to the treatment area.

Filling wrinkles or recessed scars involves multiple injections. In some cases where deeper injection of fillers is required, a local anesthetic may be used prior to treatment. Common sites for deeper tissue fillers are the nasolabial folds and marionette lines, or to enhance fullness in the cheeks.

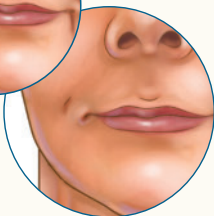
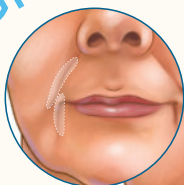
Filler of cheek volumizes areas in which youthful fat deflated with age or weight loss and can provide a more full, lifted cheek in younger patients who have less than desired fullness. Volumizing cheeks with filler also creates secondary lift along the nasolabial line and jawline.



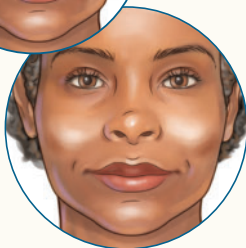
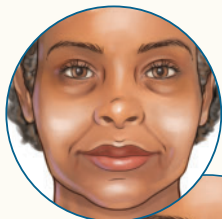
Filler along the tear trough refreshes and rejuvenates the junction between the lower lid and cheek, in addition to lightening dark circles that may be present. This will help camouflage bags seen in the lower lids.



Filler of the marionette lines with placement of filler along the jawline helps soften lines around the mouth that might express a look of anger or severity and improve angularity and lift along the jawline.



Filler globally throughout the face with a biological stimulator like PLLA helps to reduce lines and create volume in the temples, cheeks, and lower face as needed.



All of the above are FDA-approved application for specific fillers.

Risks & Safety

Dermal fillers are commonly used in plastic surgery to restore volume, smooth out wrinkles, and enhance facial features.

While they are generally considered safe, there are still some risks and safety considerations that patients should be aware of before undergoing treatment. Here are some of the most important ones:

Bruising: Bruising is a common side effect of dermal fillers, but it can usually be minimized by avoiding blood-thinning medications and supplements prior to treatment and by applying ice to the injection site afterwards.

Infection: Anytime the skin is punctured, there is a risk of infection. This risk can be minimized by ensuring that the injection site is clean and sterile, and that the injector is using proper technique and equipment.

Allergic reactions: Some people may have an allergic reaction to the filler material, which can cause swelling, redness, and itching. This risk can be minimized by choosing a filler that is appropriate for the patient's skin type and history of allergies.

Migration: In rare cases, the filler material can migrate from the injection site to other parts of the body, causing lumps, bumps, or asymmetry. This risk can be minimized by choosing an experienced injector who has a good understanding of facial anatomy and proper injection technique.

Nerve damage: Injecting filler into the wrong area or too deeply can damage nerves, causing numbness or loss of sensation in the treated area. This risk can be minimized by choosing an injector who has a good understanding of facial anatomy and proper injection technique.

Granulomas: In some cases, the body may react to the filler material by forming small, hard bumps called granulomas. This risk can be minimized by choosing a filler that is appropriate for the patient's skin type and history of reactions to fillers.

Under/Overfilling: Under filling can result in an incomplete correction, leaving one with less improvement than they had hoped for. Injecting too much filler can result in an unnatural or overdone appearance. This risk can be minimized by choosing an injector who has a good understanding of facial anatomy and who can customize the treatment to your individual needs and goals.

Ischemia: Injecting fillers into the face, particularly in the nose, cheeks, and forehead, can be risky due to the complex network of blood vessels in these areas. If a filler is accidentally injected into an artery, it can cause ischemia, which can result in tissue damage, scarring, and even vision loss in severe cases.

All risks will be fully discussed prior to your consent. It is important that you address all your questions directly with your plastic surgeon.

Recovery and Results

The results of dermal augmentation using dermal fillers are apparent immediately. Your initial appearance after treatment with any filler may include:

- Mild swelling or bruising
- Temporary numbness or redness
- An “over-filled” appearance to treated areas

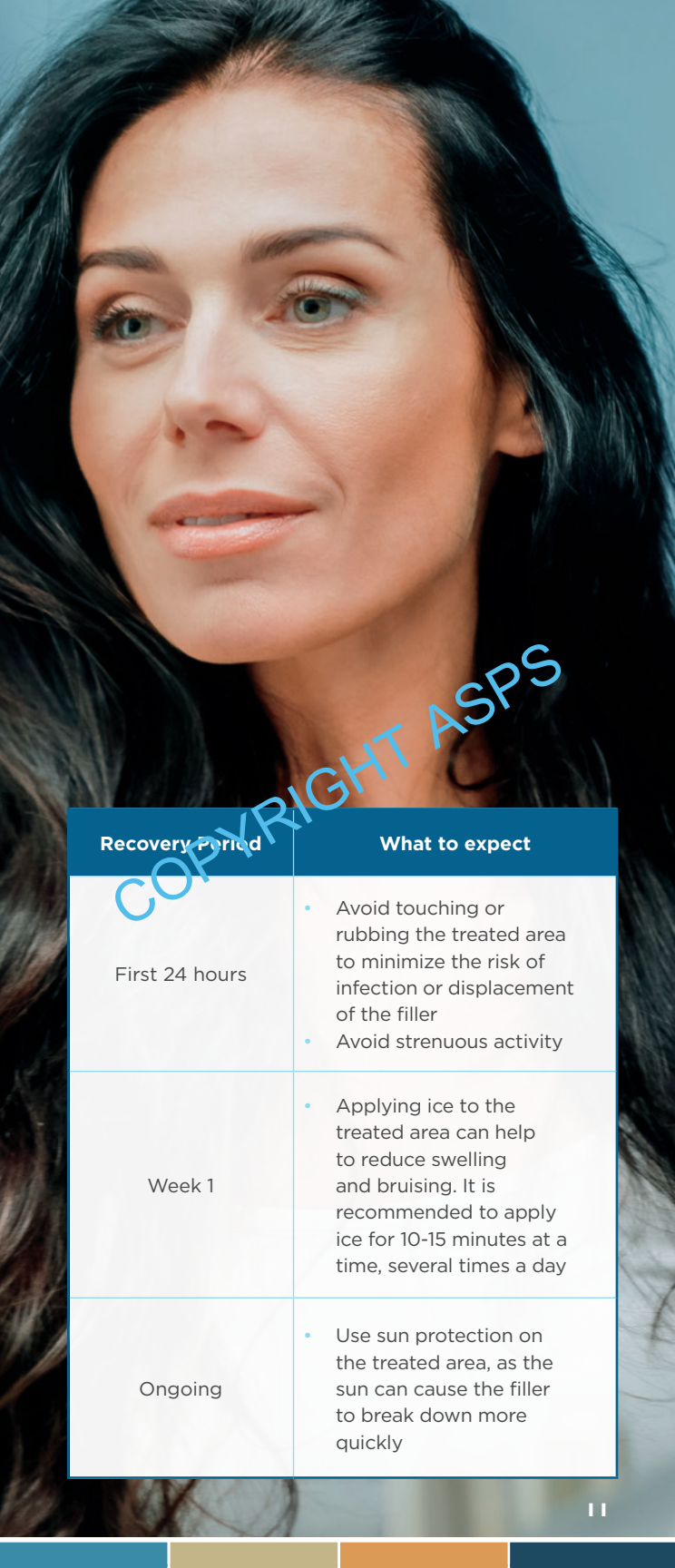
These conditions can be alleviated with topical icing and will improve within a matter of hours or just a few days. Where fat is the injected filler, these conditions may persist for a few weeks.

The results of dermal fillers are not permanent, even though a filler substance may be considered permanent. The continued aging of your face and variables in the absorption of fillers will affect how long your results last.

Most regions treated with filler will maintain results for 1-2 years depending on the product used; however the lips typically enjoy a shorter duration of filler effectiveness, on the order of 6 months to a year.

Should you choose not to repeat treatment, your appearance will return to its original condition. Plumped lips will lose volume and improved wrinkles, creases, and scars will visibly recess and fully reappear in time.

Your initial treatment will include a complete consultation. Subsequent follow-up procedures may take only a few minutes, as the full process of consultation is not necessary to repeat, although consent is required at each visit.



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Recovery Period	What to expect
First 24 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avoid touching or rubbing the treated area to minimize the risk of infection or displacement of the filler• Avoid strenuous activity
Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applying ice to the treated area can help to reduce swelling and bruising. It is recommended to apply ice for 10-15 minutes at a time, several times a day
Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use sun protection on the treated area, as the sun can cause the filler to break down more quickly

Cost

Cost is always a consideration in elective surgery. Prices for dermal fillers can vary widely. A surgeon's cost may vary based on their experience as well as geographic office location. Many plastic surgeons offer patient financing plans, so be sure to ask.

Cost may include:

- Surgeon's fee
- Hospital or surgical facility costs
- Anesthesia fees
- Prescriptions for medication
- Post-surgery garments
- Medical tests

Satisfaction involves more than a fee:

Dermal fillers are an increasingly popular cosmetic procedure that can quickly restore facial fullness and achieve a more youthful appearance.

However, to ensure both effectiveness and safety, it is important to seek out a physician with specialized training and a comprehensive understanding of facial anatomy to recommend and administer an appropriate filler.

By selecting a plastic surgeon for your dermal filler treatment, you can be confident that your procedure will be performed by a professional who has extensive expertise not only in injection therapy, but also in various non-surgical and surgical techniques for facial rejuvenation.

Words to know

- **Cupid's bow:** The middle portion of the lip which has an upturn.
- **General anesthesia:** Drugs and/or gases used during an operation to relieve pain and alter consciousness.
- **Human fat:** Fat harvested from your own body and used as a filler for dermal augmentation.
- **Hyaluronic acid:** A natural substance found in the body used as a filler.
- **Hydroxylapatite:** A mineral-like compound found naturally in human bone used as a filler.
- **Dermal fillers:** Substances used to restore volume and a more youthful appearance.
- **Intravenous sedation:** Sedatives administered by injection into a vein to help you relax.
- **Liposuction:** Also called lipoplasty or suction lipectomy, a procedure that vacuums out fat from beneath the skin's surface to reduce fullness.
- **Local anesthesia:** A drug injected directly to the site of an incision during an operation to relieve pain.
- **Dermal augmentation:** The use of dermal fillers to restore volume and youthful appearance.
- **Vermillion:** The red of your lips.

Questions to ask my plastic surgeon

- ☐ Are you certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery?
- ☐ Are you a member of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons?
- ☐ Were you trained specifically in the field of plastic surgery?
- ☐ How many years of plastic surgery training have you had?
- ☐ Do you have hospital privileges to perform this procedure? If so, at which hospitals?
- ☐ Is the office-based surgical facility accredited by a nationally- or state-recognized accrediting agency, or is it state-licensed or Medicare-certified?
- ☐ Am I a good candidate for this procedure?
- ☐ What will be expected of me to get the best results?
- ☐ Where and how will you perform my procedure?
- ☐ What surgical technique is recommended for me?
- ☐ How long of a recovery period can I expect, and what kind of help will I need during my recovery?
- ☐ What are the risks and complications associated with my procedure?
- ☐ How are complications handled?
- ☐ What are my options if I am dissatisfied with the outcome?
- ☐ Do you have before-and-after photos I can look at for this procedure and what results are reasonable for me?

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Make the Right Choice

Plastic surgery involves many choices. The first and most important is selecting a member of the **American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS)**.

ASPS member surgeons meet rigorous standards:

- Board certification by the American Board of Plastic Surgery (ABPS)[®] or in Canada by The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada[®]
- Complete at least six years of surgical training following medical school with a minimum of three years of plastic surgery residency training
- Pass comprehensive oral and written exams
- Graduate from an accredited medical school
- Complete continuing medical education, including patient safety each year
- Perform surgery in accredited, state-licensed, or Medicare-certified surgical facilities

Do not be confused by other official-sounding boards and certifications.

The ABPS is recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), which has approved medical specialty boards since 1934. There is no ABMS-recognized certifying board with “cosmetic surgery” in its name. By choosing a member of The American Society of Plastic Surgeons, you can be assured that you are choosing a qualified, highly trained plastic surgeon who is board certified by the ABPS or The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.



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444 East Algonquin Road
Arlington Heights, Illinois 60005-4664
(847) 228-9900
PlasticSurgery.org

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