

Newslinks for the week of January 7th:



Posted by Marissa Gold on January 9, 2008 11:08 AM

Juvederm Lip Injections: Something to Pout About

Last night I hung out with a bunch of models. My friend's agency was hosting the party, and needless to say she didn't have to do much convincing to get us to go. But just when we thought nothing could distract us from all the biceps and pecs in the room, we all couldn't help but notice one particular *female* model.

And it wasn't her skinny little bod we were jealous of—it was her lips!

We hypothesized amongst ourselves for a few moments (Collagen? Silicone?) and then approached her to get the goods. I guessed it was Juvederm (using the spidey sense I developed as a beauty editor) and I was right.

Juvederm is Restylane's younger, hotter little sister. It's essentially the same thing, just a slightly different formula that many doctors find easier to use (and less painful). Another plus? Dr. Neil Sadick of Manhattan's [Sadick Dermatology](#) says it causes less bruising than Restylane (translation: you can go back to your day immediately after the injections). Juvederm (like Restylane) is made of hyaluronic acid that's harmless and naturally found in the body. It's not derived from animals like collagen so there's no risk of allergic reactions. And it gradually gets reabsorbed by the body over the course of a few months to a year, so you're not stuck with your new look if you don't like it.

I used to be against nips and tucks of any kind, but I have to say, I can't hate on anyone with lips like this.

I know what you're probably thinking. No, it won't get "moved around" if you make out with someone. But here's perhaps the only health precaution to consider if you're thinking about plumping up: Avoid blood-thinning pain meds like Aleve and Advil the week prior, as they can cause bruising after injections. And anyone who's prone to cold sores might want to take an antiviral medicine the week of your appointment, as puncturing the skin can sometimes trigger an outbreak.

[Fun fact: According to the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, women most often ask to look like Angelina Jolie (big surprise) when getting lip injections.]

Cosmetic considerations

What you need to know if you're thinking about plastic surgery

Tuesday, January 08, 2008

BY MEG NUGENT

Star-Ledger Staff

NOW THAT THE holidays have been packed away, have your thoughts returned to pursuing that cosmetic procedure you hope will make for a new life in the new year?

Here are 12 tips to ponder as you think over your makeover:

1. If you're a smoker, you need to stop.

Many cosmetic and plastic surgeons refuse to operate on smokers and will tell you that outright. This is because smoking significantly hinders the healing process. Studies suggest the risk of wound complications is about the same as in the nonsmoking population after four weeks of smoking cessation. Expect your doctor to instruct you to stop smoking at least four weeks before your procedure. In addition, you won't be able to smoke for several days or weeks after your surgery.

2. Be realistic in your expectations.

If you're an 8 in the looks department on a scale of 1 to 10, you can hope to look like a 10 when all is said and done. If you're a 1, expect the best you can be is a 3, according to New Jersey plastic surgeon David Watts. The way to develop realistic expectations is to ask for photographic examples of your potential surgeon's work, Watts adds. "You want to make sure you get a chance to see their before and after photos and not just one. You need to see a whole range, what they consider to be their best, good and average work. If they only show you one or two and they're all great, you can be fooled." You also should look at photos of someone who is similar to you in appearance. For example, if you want to correct that small degree of sag in your breasts, you'll want to view photos of the work your potential surgeon did on someone with a similar amount of sagging.

3. Understand there will be scars.

A skilled surgeon will try to leave shorter scars and also will work to camouflage or hide them, say, behind the ears, in the armpit or within natural creases, but there will be scarring. All mammals heal by scarring. In addition, scars vary depending on skin type and genetics.

4. You need to check your physician's credentials.

More and more, doctors in various specialties aside from plastic surgery, such as dermatologists, gynecologists, ophthalmologists and dentists, are performing cosmetic surgical procedures. Find out if your chosen surgeon is board-certified. For example, plastic surgeons certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery have had at least five years of approved surgical training after medical school, including at least two years of a plastic surgery residency. Certification by the American Board of Facial, Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery requires completion of a yearlong fellowship training program, written and oral exams and prior certification in either plastic surgery

or otolaryngology (ears, nose and throat). This board certification, which is deemed a "meaningful credential" by Wendy Lewis, author of "America's Cosmetic Doctors & Dentists" (Castle Connolly Medical Ltd., \$29.95), is mainly pursued by otolaryngologists interested in cosmetic procedures.

A word of caution: Just because your surgeon has board certification doesn't mean she has experience performing the procedure you want. Ask physicians how often they've done the surgery. If they've performed it only a few times or not at all, that's a big red flag you shouldn't ignore.

5. Your doctor should be affiliated with a hospital.

If not, don't use that physician. More than 60 percent of cosmetic procedures are done on an outpatient basis, such as in a doctor's office, an accredited surgical center or a hospital that includes outpatient services. You want your doctor to be able to move you to a hospital immediately if your procedure goes awry.

6. Make sure your physician knows your medical history.

According to the American Society for Dermatologic Surgery, providing your doctor with thorough and accurate information about your medical background is just as important as choosing the right doctor to perform your procedure. "Everyone reacts differently to medical procedures, and physicians need to take into account if a patient has special health needs or restrictions," according to a statement by the society.

7. Find out about post-procedure care.

Make sure your doctor has a competent staff in place to help get you through the healing process. "Your time with the doctor is limited. Surgeons do their thing and then get out of there. The surgeon will not take out your stitches and see you multiple times after" your procedure, says Lewis, a cosmetic surgery consultant in New York City. You want to be able to call your surgeon's office and have ready access to a nurse on staff who will answer your questions and tell you what to do in the event of a complication.

8. Seek more than one opinion -- within reason.

Try to consult with at least two physicians. Consultation with three is good, but more than that can leave you confused. If you go beyond four consultations, you're either going to the wrong doctors or plastic surgery may not really be an option for you, says Lewis. Also, beware the hard sell. "If they say, 'We're usually booked for three months, but we just so happen to have an opening for next Thursday and if you make a decision right now, we'll take \$500 off our surgical fee,' keep walking," says Lewis.

9. You should know the limits of a "mini" lift.

"One of the biggest misconceptions is that people think they're going to get the equivalent of surgery with a minimally invasive treatment. People think they're going to get a face-lift in a syringe, and that's not possible," says Richard D'Amico, national president of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons and chief of the department of plastic surgery at Englewood Hospital and Medical Center.

"Aging is three things," says Vito Quatela, a facial plastic surgeon and president of the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. "The sagging and gravitational changes, the changing in the pattern of the skin, where you get etching and lines and wrinkles, and loss of volume. (Dermal) fillers fill the face out. A fuller face looks more youthful, but fillers can't lift sagging skin. That's beyond the capacity of that modality." That's where surgery needs to be considered.

10. Know that plastic surgery won't stop the aging process.

Plastic surgery is designed to "make you look better for a time," says Eleanor Barone, a plastic surgeon at Advanced Dermatology and the Center for Laser and Cosmetic Surgery in New York. A face-lift done on someone with good skin who takes care of her skin can last 10 to 15 years.

11. Make sure the work you want done fits in with your life and schedule.

Most people can't afford to take six weeks to recover from plastic surgery. That's why there's so much interest these days in less invasive ways to enhance physical appearance. In addition, board-certified plastic surgeons are moving away from performing multiple major surgeries for safety reasons. As a result, people who are thinking of having several procedures done at once may want to think about parceling out the procedures.

12. You need to have a handle on your budget and understand what different procedures cost because they can get pretty pricey.

In the New York metropolitan area, for example, upper and lower eyelid surgery can run \$5,000 to \$8,000, while breast augmentation can cost \$7,000 to \$8,000. An average face-lift can be \$7,000 to \$12,000, while what Lewis calls a "Park Avenue face-lift" can carry a tab of as much as \$30,000.



Crow's Feet and Wrinkles? Try Acupuncture

By [Michelle Andrews](#)

Posted January 7, 2008

If there's a Zen way to smooth away wrinkles, facial acupuncture claims to be it. Rather than [injecting Botox](#), a bacterial poison that paralyzes the muscles that cause brows to furrow, proponents of facial acupuncture say they accomplish the same results more gently and naturally by relaxing the muscles. Whether it actually works is an open question; no studies have been conducted to gauge its effectiveness. But it's less likely than methods that rely on chemicals to cause unpleasant side effects.



Acupuncture treatment on the face.

In addition to placing clusters of tiny needles in facial trouble spots like frown lines and crow's feet, practitioners of "facial rejuvenation" generally insert needles in the hands, arms, and legs to reduce stress or strengthen the immune system, for example. "We treat the whole body, because what happens in your skin is a reflection of what's going on in your body," says Gira Patel, a licensed acupuncturist at the Osher Clinical Center for Complementary and Integrative Medical Therapies at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. Ten to 15 weekly one-hour sessions later, patients often report they have fewer fine lines, tighter skin, and better skin tone, she says.

Western-trained doctors say they can understand how acupuncture might smooth out the frown lines. "Anything that would teach or train an individual to relax the facial muscles would obviously improve the wrinkles and improve the appearance of being angry or tense," says Foad Nahai, a board-certified plastic surgeon and president of the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery.

But skeptics question some practitioners' other claims: that facial acupuncture can improve overall skin tone or stimulate the production of collagen, the structural protein that holds the skin together and helps keep it taut. Needling the skin causes injury, which stimulates collagen production. However, "it would take a heck of a lot of needle sticks, hundreds of them for a long time, to lead to collagen stimulation," says Nahai.

Doctors also question whether the procedure can produce any lasting results. "Lots of frowning is tied into the emotional content of speech," notes Richard Glogau, a clinical professor of dermatology at the University of California-San Francisco. "I'm not sure that short-term acupuncture is really going to affect that link."

A typical patient at Hamptons Health Circle, an acupuncture clinic in Pasadena, Calif., might sign up for 10 sessions at \$100 a session. Results build up over time, claims clinic owner Charles Yarborough, so that by the end of 10 sessions, a patient should see noticeably brighter skin with fewer fine lines. Once they've completed the initial round of treatment, people generally come in for a "tuneup" of one session every four to six weeks.

Any licensed acupuncturist can do facial acupuncture—no formal training or certificate is required. Yarborough operates a [website](#) to connect patients with practitioners. The bulk of his business remains pain management, anxiety treatment, insomnia, and the like. But facial acupuncture is on the rise. "I used to have to convince people that it doesn't hurt and that it works," he says. "Now people are coming to me."



Is Botox Safe During Pregnancy?

With No Research About Botox and Pregnancy, Doctors Advise Caution



Are cosmetic procedures like Botox safe during pregnancy?

By **EMILY FRIEDMAN**

Jan. 10, 2008

Most mothers-to-be already know the basic dos and don'ts of pregnancy: Get plenty of rest, no smoking and no drinking — but what about cosmetic procedures like Botox?

Despite little research to determine what, if any, effect wrinkle-eraser Botox could have on pregnant women and their unborn children, obstetricians and cosmetic surgeons overwhelmingly told ABCNEWS.com that they would not advise their pregnant patients to get injections of the popular drug.

"I can't tell you it's not safe, but I can tell you it's not advisable," said Donnica Moore, the president of Sapphire Women's Health Group based in New Jersey. "In pregnancy our general premise is that any type of medical treatment or intervention that justifies the risks ... is OK to use, but there is no medical justification for Botox cosmetic in pregnancy."

The lack of research surrounding the use of Botox during pregnancy should be a deterrent, said Moore, an obstetrician, who said she would never advise one of her patients to get Botox.

"As long as the evidence is conflicting or confusing, we should err on the side of not doing whatever the intervention is," said Moore.

And as for women who get Botox before they become pregnant, there is no way of knowing whether there will be any long-term effects on the unborn child, according to Moore.

"If this is something [a pregnant woman] did before she was pregnant, there's nothing that she can do about it now," Moore told ABCNEWS.com. "And as I said, we don't know of any definite risks."

Botox is the trade name for botulinum toxin A, one of the toxins produced by the botulism bacteria that causes food poisoning. The compound is safe when injected beneath the skin and it works by weakening or paralyzing muscles or blocking nerves, thus causing wrinkles and lines to be less visible.

The effects last about three to four months. But according to the Food and Drug Administration, side effects can include pain at the injection site, flulike symptoms, headache and upset stomach.

Part of the reason there is so little research about cosmetic procedures during pregnancy is that in order to weigh the effects of the process, doctors and scientists would have to actually perform the procedures on pregnant women, said Roxanne Guy, the former president of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons.

"Nobody really wants to study drugs during pregnancy, unless it's something that's life saving," said Guy. "This is because you'd always worry there may be some bad outcome for the baby."

"It's probably not [harmful], but I still think it's bad medicine to do something like that during pregnancy," added Guy.

Why Botox Instead of 'Natural Glow'?

Doctors urge pregnant women to remember that the combination of hormones and increased blood flow will make your face "glow" anyway during pregnancy and suggest that cosmetic procedures are likely to go unnoticed amid an already-transforming body.

"There are so many changes in the skin during pregnancy," said Robert Zurawin, an associate professor in the department of obstetrics and gynecology at Baylor College

of Medicine in Houston. "Most people get puffy and gain or lose weight, so there's really no reason to do Botox during pregnancy."

"Why waste your money when you don't know what you'll look like after nine months?" added Zurawin.

"One of the bonuses of pregnancy is that if you had any wrinkles before [you got pregnant] they're not going to show as much during pregnancy," said obstetrician Moore.